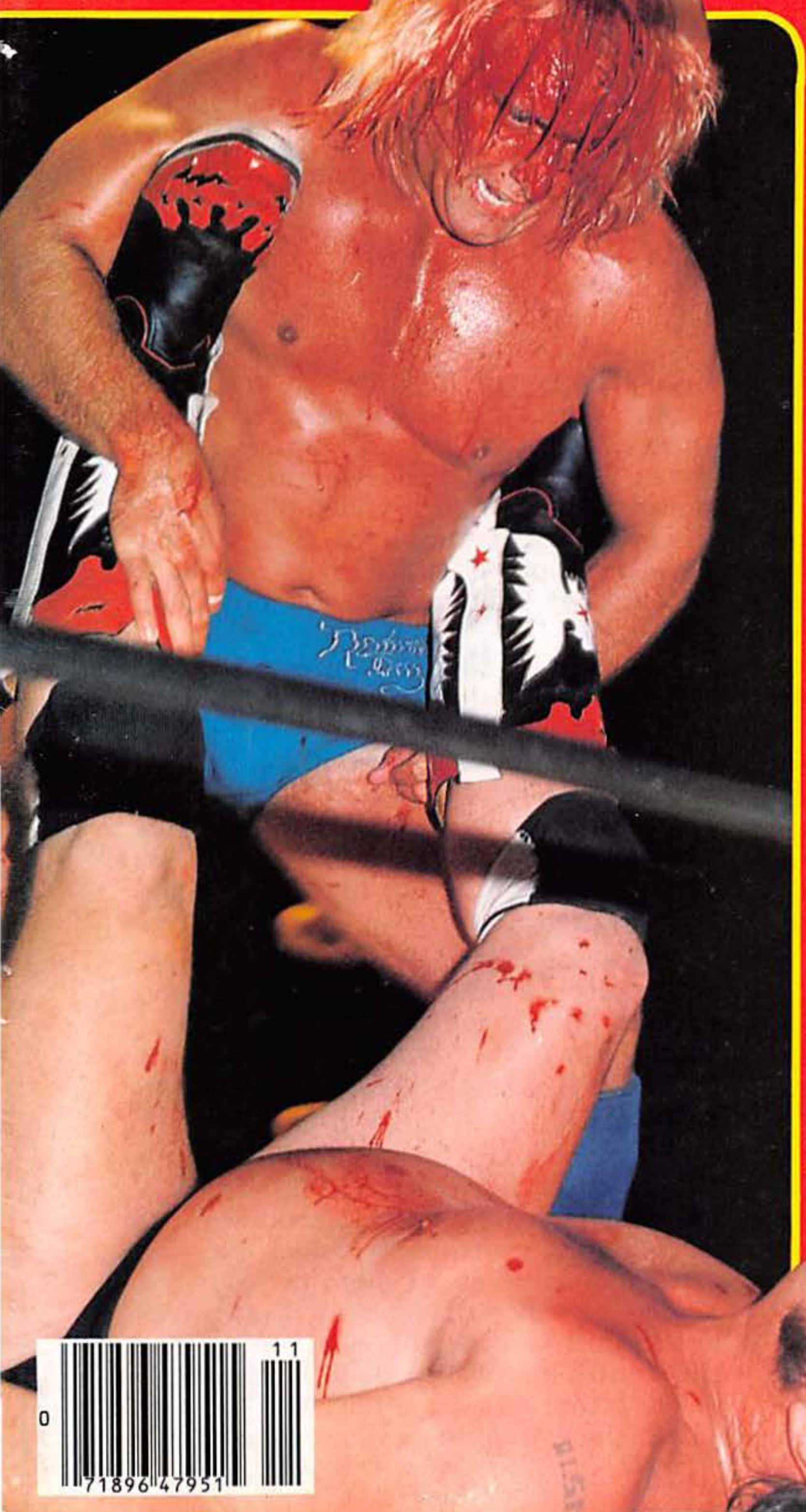
Superstar Graham Asks The Fans:
"DID I MAKE A MISTAKE?"

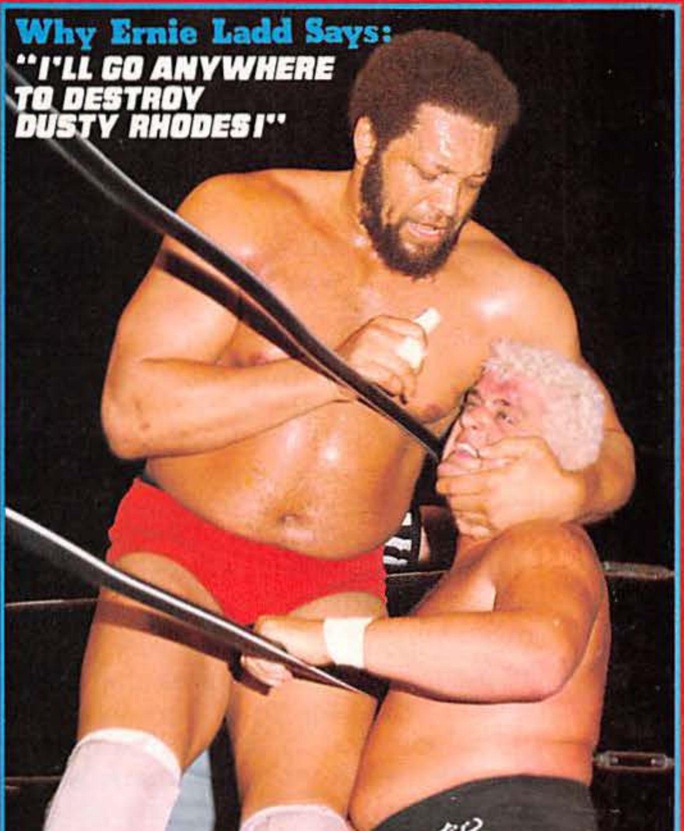
VICTORY SPORTS SERIES

November 1978
47951 $1.00

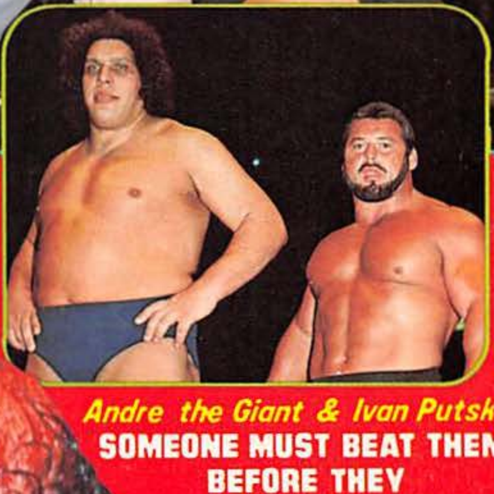
THE Wrestler



THE TREACHERY THAT HAS MADE RIC FLAIR A KILLER



Why Ernie Ladd Says:
"I'LL GO ANYWHERE TO DESTROY DUSTY RHODES!"



Andre the Giant & Ivan Putski:
SOMEONE MUST BEAT THEM BEFORE THEY DESTROY THEMSELVES!

when I planned to
retire before

this is the business that made it possible

Starting with borrowed money, in just eight years I gained financial security, sold out at a profit and retired.

"Not until I was forty did I make up my mind that I was going to retire before ten years had passed. I knew I couldn't do it on a salary, no matter how good. I knew I couldn't do it working for others. It was perfectly obvious to me that I had to start a business of my own. But that posed a problem. What kind of business? Most of my money was tied up. Temporarily I was broke. But, when I found the business I wanted I was able to start it for a small amount of borrowed money.

"To pyramid this investment into retirement in less than ten years seems like magic, but in my opinion any man in good health who has the same ambition and drive that motivated me, could achieve such a goal. Let me give you a little history.

"I finished high school at the age of 18 and got a job as a shipping clerk. My next job was butchering at a plant that processed boneless beef. Couldn't see much future there. Next, I got a job as a Greyhound Bus Driver. The money was good. The work was pleasant, but I couldn't see it as leading to retirement. Finally I took the plunge and went into business for myself.

"I managed to raise enough money with my savings to invest in a combination motel, restaurant, grocery, and service station. It didn't take long to get my eyes opened. In order to keep that business going my wife and I worked from dawn to dusk, 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Putting in all those hours didn't match my idea of independence and it gave me no time for my favorite sport—golf! Finally we both agreed that I should look for something else.

"I found it. Not right away. I investigated a lot of businesses offered as franchises. I felt that I wanted the guidance of an experienced company—wanted to have the benefit of the plans that had brought success to others, plus the benefit of running my own business under an established name that had national recognition.

"Most of the franchises offered were too costly for me. Temporarily all my capital was frozen in the motel. But I found that the Duraclean franchise offered me exactly what I had been looking for.

"I could start for a small amount. (Today, as little as $1985 starts a Duraclean dealership.) I could work it as a one-man business to start. No salaries to pay. I could operate from my home. No office or shop or other overhead. For transportation, I could use the trunk of my car. (I bought the truck later, out of profits.) And best of all, there was no ceiling on my earn-

fifty

a true story
by John B. Haikey

ings. I could build a business as big as my ambition and energy dictated. I could put on as many men as I needed to cover any volume. I could make a profit on every man working for me. And I could build little by little, or as fast as I wished.

"So, I started. I took the wonderful training furnished by the company. When I was ready I followed the simple plan outlined in the training. During the first period I did all the service work myself. By doing it myself, I could make much more per hour than I had ever made on a salary. Later, I would hire men, train them, pay them well, and still make an hourly profit on their time that made my idea of retirement possible —I had joined the country club and now I could play golf whenever I wished.

"What is this wonderful business? It's Duraclean. And what is Duraclean? It's an improved, space-age process for cleaning upholstered furniture, rugs and tacked down carpets. It not only cleans but it enlivens and sparkles up the colors. It does not wear down the fiber or drive dirt into the base of the rug as machine scrubbing does. Instead it *lifts out* the dirt by means of an absorbent dry foam.

"Furniture dealers and department stores refer their customers to the Duraclean Specialist. Insurance men say Duraclean can save them money on fire claims. Hotels, motels, specialty shops and big stores make annual contracts for keeping their carpets and furniture fresh and clean. One Duraclean Specialist signed a contract for over $40,000 a year for just one hotel.

"Well, that's the business I was able to start with such a small investment. That's the business I built up over a period of eight years. And, that's the business I sold out at a substantial profit before I was fifty."

Would you like to taste the freedom and independence enjoyed by Mr. Haikey? You can. Let us send you the facts. Mail the coupon, and you'll receive all the details, absolutely without obligation. No salesman will ever call on you. When you receive our illustrated booklet, you'll learn how we show you STEP BY STEP how to get customers; and how to have your customers get you more customers from their recommendations.

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THE Wrestler

CONTENTS/NOVEMBER 1978

6 **OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
Where do the experts rate your favorites?

8 **YOU ASKED US**
These questions demand answers!

10 **WHAT'S HAPPENING!**
Reporter Bill Apter tells all

12 **CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS**
The ups and downs of the wrestling circuit

14 **THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF PEN PALS**
Is your picture printed this month?

18 **YOUR LETTERS**
Share what's on your mind with all of wrestling

20 **VERNE GAGNE—SPY IN THE MIDDLE**
Why is he refereeing a bout featuring two prospective opponents?

22 **"DID I MAKE A MISTAKE?"**
Superstar Graham's question to the fans

25 **THE NIGHT THEY SACRIFICED POOR TOMMY RICH**
No rookie should be forced to wrestle Sheik

26 **SOMEONE MUST BEAT THEM BEFORE THEY DESTROY THEMSELVES**
Or the future is bleak for Andre the Giant and Ivan Putski

30 **"WHO THE HELL IS DALE VALENTINE?"**
Bruiser Brodie gets a painful introduction

32 **THE BRAINWASHING OF BOB ORTON JR.**
Bobby Heenan continues his evil ways

34 **"I'LL GO ANYWHERE TO DESTROY DUSTY RHODES!"**
The Ernie Ladd-American Dream war rages on . . . and on

38 **MASCARAS VS. PATERA . . . WE THINK???**
Was it really the masked star and the strong-man in that ring?

40 **THE TREACHERY THAT HAS MADE RIC FLAIR A KILLER**
Never again will he call a man a friend

44 **THE LUMBERJACKS WIN—AND DEFEND—THE WWWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP**
This ruthless duo may be unbeatable

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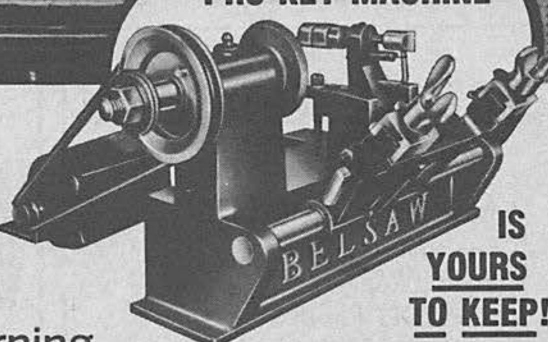
"War injuries left me severely handicapped, but I'm making a very good living in Locksmithing, thanks to your course. Word of mouth advertising has been enough to make my business a financial success from the start. Besides, I'm my own boss doing something I thoroughly enjoy,"

says Glen Johnson, Larned, Kansas.

THIS PRO KEY MACHINE



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Address____________________

City__________ State__________ Zip__________

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WIDE WRESTLING FEDERATION

Champion: BOB BACKLUND
1—IVAN KOLOFF
2—GEORGE STEELE
3—DUSTY RHODES
4—SUPERSTAR GRAHAM
5—SPIROS ARION
6—IVAN PUTSKI
7—LUKE GRAHAM
8—DINO BRAVO
9—STAN STASIAK
10—TONY GAREA

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

Champion: NICK BOCKWINKLE
1—VERNE GAGNE
2—CRUSHER
3—RAY STEVENS
4—BILLY ROBINSON
5—LARRY HENNIG
6—BOB ORTON JR.
7—JIM BRUNZELL
8—GREG GAGNE
9—RUFUS R. JONES
10—SUPER DESTROYER II

MOST POPULAR

1—DUSTY RHODES
2—ANDRE THE GIANT
3—RICK STEAMBOAT
4—MIL MASCARAS
5—IVAN PUTSKI
6—WAHOO McDANIEL
7—PAUL JONES
8—MR. WRESTLING II
9—BILLY ROBINSON
10—DINO BRAVO

IVAN PUTSKI

ANGELO MOSCA

VERNE GAGNE

GEORGE STEELE

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

Champion: HARLEY RACE
1—DUSTY RHODES
2—RIC FLAIR
3—JACK BRISCO
4—KEN PATERA
5—RICK STEAMBOAT
6—BRUISER
7—DICK MURDOCH
8—DICK SLATER
9—THE SPOILER
10—JIMMY SNUKA

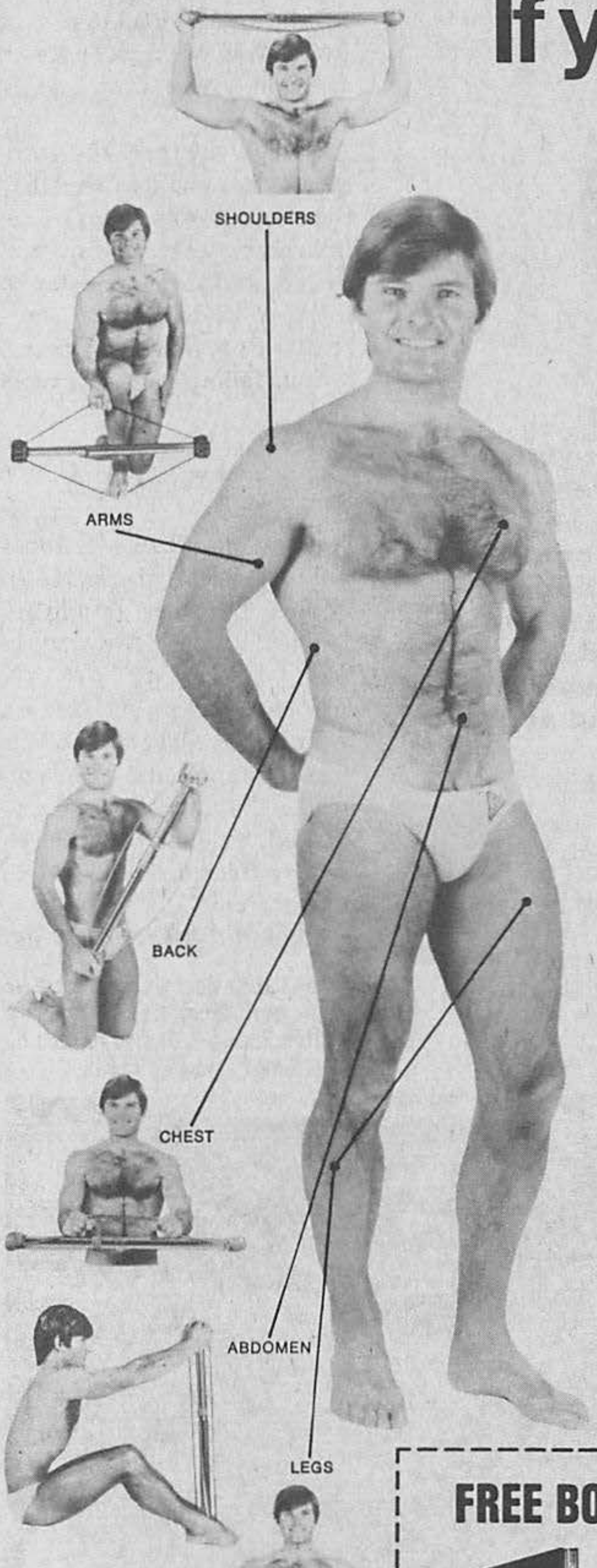
TAG TEAMS

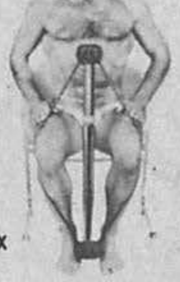
1—GREG VALENTINE & BARON VON RASCHKE
2—THE YUKON LUMBERJACKS
3—GREG GAGNE & JIM BRUNZELL
4—JACK & JERRY BRISCO
5—MR. SAITO & MR. SATO
6—RICK STEAMBOAT & PAUL JONES
7—STEVEN KEIRN & MIKE GRAHAM
8—SUPERSTAR & LUKE GRAHAM
9—RAY STEVENS & PAT PATTERSON
10—HECTOR AND CHAVO GUERRERO

MOST HATED

1—RIC FLAIR
2—KEN PATERA
3—GEORGE STEELE
4—ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER
5—BARON VON RASCHKE
6—SPIROS ARION
7—GREG VALENTINE
8—THE SPOILER
9—KILLER KARL KOX
10—THE SHEIK

If you're into fitness, Bullworker® puts it all together *in only 5 minutes a day:*





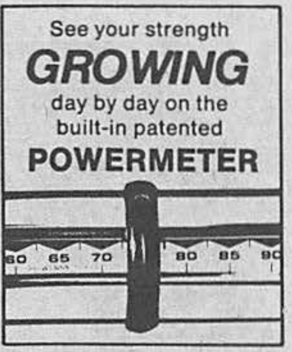
"Looking for a fitness program that's fast, easy and gets results right away?," asks fitness expert, Bob Breton. "Bullworker puts it all together. In just 5 minutes a day you can give your body a complete fitness workout: shoulders, back, arms, chest, abdomen and legs.

It's fast: each exercise takes only 7 seconds, once a day.

It's easy: any man between 15 and 65 in good general health can run through the whole program without getting tired.

You see your progress right from the very first day on the built-in Powermeter gauge. After two to three weeks of training, most men can expect to measure an extra inch or two of muscle on their shoulders, chest and biceps—and an inch or two less flab around the middle.

And that's just the start: there are specialized exercises for building-up or trimming down any part of your body you want to. What's more, since Bullworker training is progressive, you perform better each time. Yet the training always seems easy since with every workout your strength increases by about 1%—that's an increase of up to 50% in the first three months.



"I earn my living by keeping executives in top shape," says Bob. "My customers want results and they want them fast. I recommend Bullworker for one reason only: because it's the most advanced fitness trainer on the market and you better believe it."

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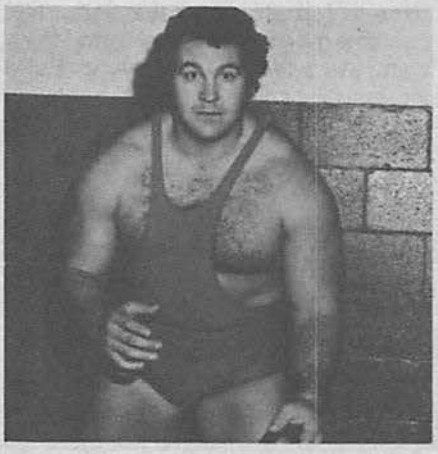
YOU ASKED US

Here's the monthly feature which YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR question! Only the best questions will be answered—so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to: YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, PO Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571. Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion!

Q: Ask Ken Patera what he thinks about being rated high on the "Most Hated List"—Terrence Robinson, Richmond. Va.

A: "I don't give a damn where those magazine creeps rate me!" Patera screamed at us over the phone. "Everyone knows I'm truly the most loved individual in the entire world!"



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Q: Who did Greg Gagne and Jim Brunzell defeat to win the AWA tag team belts?—Jeff Wintle, Tampa, Fla.

A: Gagne and Brunzell upended then tag team champions Blackjack Lanza and Bobby Duncum in a wild brawl to cop the belts.

***

Q: Does Jack Brisco want to wrestle Bob Backlund for Bob's WWWF title?—Kevin Jamison, New Kensington, Pa.

A: Although neither the promoters nor the two wrestlers themselves would confirm this rumor, we have heard that Brisco is indeed interested in the WWWF title. As you may recall, Bob and Jack had a serious falling out a few years ago.

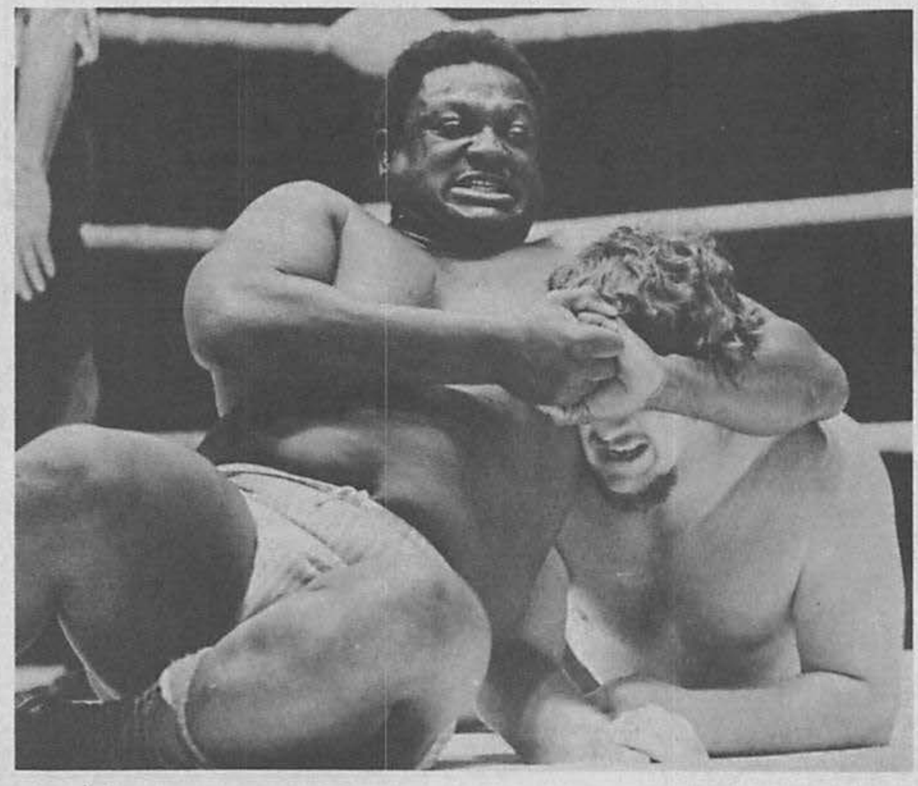
***

Q: Is it true that Rufus R. Jones will turn rulebreaker and join Bobby Heenan's family?—Thomas Roberts, Milwaukee, Wisc.

A: When we relayed your question to Rufus, Tom, he laughed for nearly one minute. "No way, brother!" the "Freight Train" assured his fans. "I want to destroy Heenan and his stable not join 'em!"

(Continued on page 58)

Far left: Ken Patera doesn't care where we rate him in our "Most Hated" column! Below: Rufus R. Jones denies rumors he will join Bobby Heenan's "family."



Now—enjoy a life of unbelievable riches, lasting love and constant protection with the secrets in this startling WITCH BOOK—

THE MAGIC POWER OF WITCHCRAFT

Whatever it is you need or want, Witchcraft can get it for you quickly, easily, and automatically, say these experts. You'll discover how it can bring abundant and overflowing wealth, find or bring back a lover, ward off evil influences, and much more—step-by-step in plain English, with complete easy-to-follow instructions!

Yes . . . Witchcraft! Every time you hear the word it brings with it the feelings of deep occult secrets—secrets that you would like to know so that your life can be better; so that your enemies will stop bothering you; so that serenity, love, power and comfort can be yours!

THE MAGIC POWER OF WITCHCRAFT lays bare these secrets for the first time! Do you want a bank account bursting at the seams with money? A love life that would make a sultan envious? Supreme power to crush your enemies and reward your friends? What would it be worth to you to utter a simple incantation that would cause any pain to vanish? Or say another, and immediately recover some lost object?

What would it be worth to you to fly through time and space, on astral wings, as Witches do . . . go wherever you wish . . . do whatever you wish . . . without being detected . . . watch the antics of others behind closed doors . . . hear private conversations . . . make time run forward or backward . . . read tomorrow's newspaper in a "black mirror" . . . find out what really happened in history . . . make your face old or young at will!

BRINGS AUTOMATIC ASSURED SUCCESS!

Witchcraft can bring your heart's desire! You can use it to heal someone, influence the boss to give you that raise, or make someone stop bothering you! It's easy! The easiest thing in the world! You don't have to be wealthy or super-intelligent to get started! Thousands of ordinary people all over the world are using Witchcraft Power right now!

Witches have known for centuries that people are scared of them and their powers! And rightly so! NOW YOU CAN SHARE THE SAME POWER that gives you—literally—life and death control over other persons! Is someone bothering you? No problem at all, with Magic Witchcraft. For example, there is a spell called the "Cross Not My Path" ritual, for people who are having neighbor trouble. When you use it, you know you will never again have trouble with this neighbor!

With these amazing Witchcraft secrets, other people will look up to you—in awe—you'll automatically dazzle others with your power to make things happen at your will, you'll be Master of your destiny, and never have to apologize to anyone for anything!

Whatever you want or need, whatever frustration is bothering you, Witchcraft will help you. It is not evil—nor is it Black Magic. Like electricity, it is simply a power given by nature for the use of men, to make life easier.

You'll see how to get paid without working . . . how to get expensive clothes and furs FREE . . . how to get a first-class plane seat FREE . . . how to vacation at the finest hotels, motels, pools and pleasure palaces, start living like a millionaire as Witches do!

AMAZING TECHNIQUE HAS HELPED THOUSANDS!

Witchcraft secrets like these can make you rich faster than anything else in the world! Here's how others have used them to make miracles happen in their daily lives!

You'll see how Vern, a man who likes to give a lot of expensive parties, was always short of cash until he discovered the amazing WITCH'S MONEY JAR—now all he has to do is dip in, for it brings him an endless flow of cash! Evelyn, a waitress, was always lending money to friends, and was always broke. Finally, she placed her last dollar on the table, and worked the MONEY MAGNET SPELL over it. All at once, dozens of people who had borrowed money from her, rushed to pay her back!

Hank was perpetually broke. One night he got together with some friends, and they decided to cast the MONEY SPELL. The very next day, Hank received in the mail a check for some $250 worth of insurance. (He had never heard of the company that sent the check, he was not insured with them, and had never even made a claim—but he accepted the money.) Another member of the group that used the spell, a 40-year-old secretary, received an automobile as a gift! All the other members of the group received amazing windfalls of money, as well! You'll see how Dexter, a retiree, lives RENT FREE *and* receives $200 a week at the age of 78, with a secret you'll find in this Witch Book! You'll see how Claudine, a secretary, was able to wear the finest, most expensive furs—FREE—and spend weekends at an expensive ski lodge in the mountains, where she met a wonderful man! How Ruth L., a widow—with nothing but a small pension, and a little savings—received her dream house, by using a simple 5-minute ritual on page 38 of this book!

Using the same Witchcraft secrets, YOU can achieve peace of mind and freedom from money worries for the rest of your life!

YOU CAN HEAL YOURSELF AS WITCHES DO!

Feeling sick today? Plagued by a lot of troublesome illnesses? Perhaps some relative is sick and constantly demanding your attention? Or perhaps it is even a pet that needs help? With the MAGIC POWER OF WITCHCRAFT, you can cure anything, say authors Gavin and Yvonne Frost: "In our experience . . . we have not found a single incurable disease!"

• **ANDY DISSOLVES A GALLSTONE!**—Andy M. developed gallstones. When his illness became too troublesome to ignore, he went to a doctor. Urine tests revealed that he was chronically alkaline. His body was badly out of balance. Using this Witchcraft method to restore balance to the mind and body—in a short while, X-rays showed that he had no more gallstones! Andy never again suffered the excruciating pain of passing stones!

In the same way, say Gavin and Yvonne Frost, almost all illness can be prevented. You are actually employing an ancient Witchcraft method to remove diseased tissue! Even if you do not have any belief in the results, the power will work for you!

One woman, who had been in a wheelchair for 26 years, due to polio and arthritis, used the Witchcraft healing method, and reported that she had no pain and could walk and garden again! A man reported that his son's deep 3rd degree burns miraculously healed overnight!

• **SO SIMPLE A CHILD USES IT!**—A 4-year-old girl asked if she could try to heal a man who was limping—due to a torn ligament—with this simple Witchcraft healing method. In a matter of moments, she started her chant, laying her hands on the weak ankle. The man was miraculously cured! To skeptics, this should be convincing PROOF that anyone can use it!

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Whether you want infinite wealth, or just a comfortable new home, financial security, fine possessions, love, companionship, new health and vigor, power to control others, secret knowledge, protection from evil, or anything else, the magic power of Witchcraft can bring it to you quickly, easily and automatically! It's the easiest thing in the world!

• **HOW TO SEE INTO THE FUTURE!**—Would you like to be able to see the future? You CAN with the magic Black Mirror you'll see how to make on page 23. All you need is some ink and a bowl of water. Then use the chant on this page, and you will be able to see many things. One man uses it to read tomorrow's newspaper. YOU can use it to check the stock market or that important horse race!

• **MAKE TIME RUN BACKWARD OR FORWARD!**—A Witch uses ancient methods to make time stand still or to run it backward or forward! To make your face look young or old at will, all you need is some morning dew, and the instructions on page 27. You can fly through time and space, on astral wings, go anywhere, do anything, with the simple method on page 126. You can visit a friend, look in on an acquaintance and see what he is doing—even appear in someone's dreams, and convince that person to do whatever you wish!

• **SECRETS OF SILENT PERSUASION!**—There is a magic handshake that Witches often use, revealed on page 62. With this secret, you can implant a thought in someone's mind! You can use this Witchcraft power to dominate others! Control your boss! Make someone love you! Leave your enemies groveling in the dust! There is even a gazing technique Witches use on page 45, for identical thoughts. With this secret, you can read your friend's mind and share his or her identical thoughts!

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- How to Bring Your Perfect Mate to You!
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- Withcraft Power to Make You Irresistible to Others!
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MEET THE AUTHORS

GAVIN FROST, B.Sc., Ph.D., D.D., is Archbishop of the Church of Wicca, New Bern, North Carolina with national headquarters in Salem, Missouri, branches in several states and worldwide membership. He is Marshal of the Gold Star of England, with the right to wear the Saffron Robe and one of the very few Witches in the Western Hemisphere privileged to wear the authentic mark of initiation on his wrist. Although descended from a long line of mystics and scholars, and formerly a Vice-President and Director of International Operations for major aerospace companies, he prefers to be thought of as a humble teacher.

Mrs. YVONNE FROST, A.A., D.D., with her husband Gavin Frost, devotes her time to giving private instruction and publishing *Survival*, the newsletter of the Church of Wicca, of which she is a Bishop.

Articles by or about Gavin and Yvonne Frost have appeared in such national publications as *Midnight* and the *National Enquirer*.

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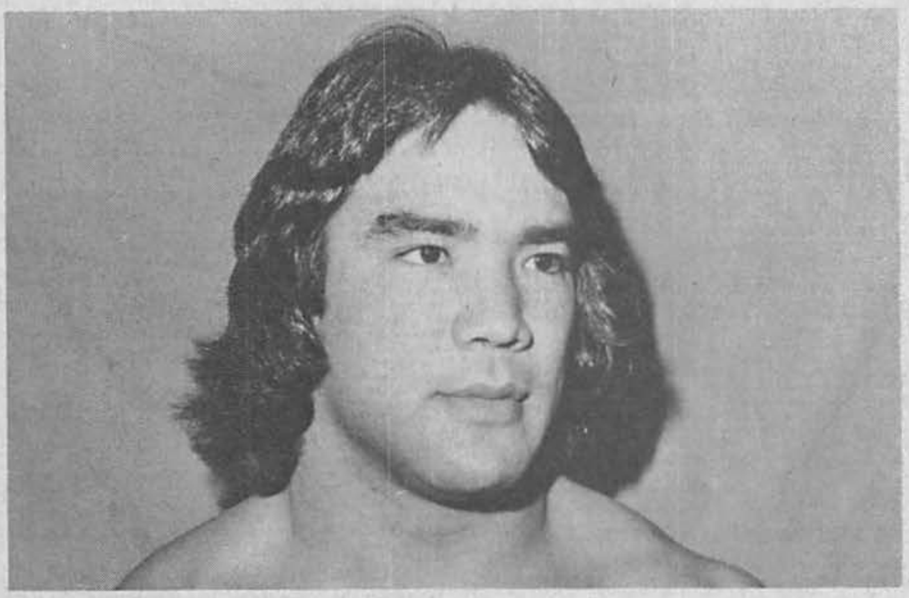
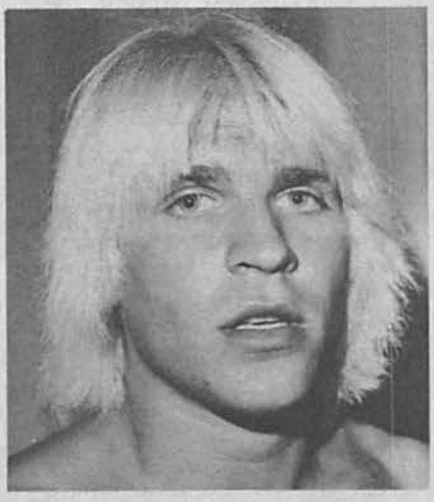
WHAT'S HAPPENING!

By BILL APTER

THE GRIM TERROR of blacklisting has slammed into the face of young Rick Steamboat. Ric Flair, current holder of the United States Heavyweight Championship, vows never to let Steamboat wrestle for the title again. What's more, Flair has it on good word that NWA champion Harley Race will go along with him, as will AWA king Nick Bockwinkle (and at least 15 regional title holders have agreed to do the same). This is the ugliest conspiracy since WWWF managers refused to let their top rated men grapple now champion Bob Backlund. This definitely could ruin Steamboat's career. Rick doesn't know where to turn for help and even the entire staff of this magazine cannot find a key to get Rick out of this mess. If you have any ideas, send them to us and we will pass each and every one on to Steamboat.



Rick Steamboat (above) is the victim of Ric Flair's "blacklisting." Only your letters may be able to help Rick. Tommy Rich (below) is after big Ernie Ladd.



Spiros Arion's manager, Fred Blassie claims that *he* is the reason Spiros failed to capture the WWWF title from Bob Backlund at New York's Madison Square Garden. "I was busy managing some men in Japan when Spiros' title match came up," Blassie said. "Because I was not at ringside to be with Spiros, he was brokenhearted and did not give his all. Well, pencil-neck Backlund, I WILL be at Spiros' next match against you. I WILL see to it that you lose your title. I WILL laugh like hell when they take you out on a stretcher, Howdy Doody!"

Japanese wrestler Antonio Inoki has a featured part in the movie, "The Bad News Bears Go To Japan" . . . Tommy Rich is anxious to test his skills against the brute force of Ernie Ladd . . . Captain Lou Albano's WWWF championship tag team duo of the Yukon Lumberjacks turned down the challenge of Jack and Jerry Brisco. "They're no competition for my

(Continued on page 46)

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CORRESPONDENTS Reports

Bulldog Bob Brown (above) engaged in a brutal battle against Colonel Buck Robley which Brown won in a strange way!

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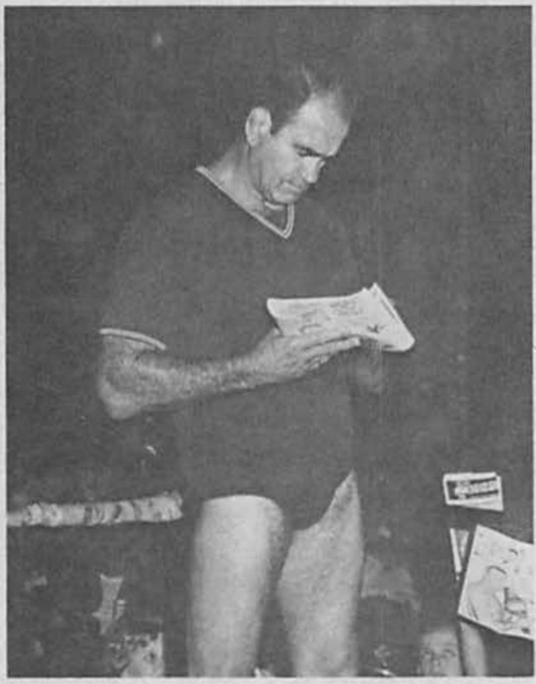


Six time NWA champion Lou Thesz (above) just wrestled the Mexican Angel and gave the masked man a terrible time. Current NWA king Harley Race (below) had his hands full when he wrestled Tony Atlas.

KANSAS CITY, KAN.—*Correspondent:* **Mark Blackwell**—Bulldog Bob Brown and Colonel Buck Robley battled in a furious Texas Death Match to conclusively settle the question as to the number one wrestler in the Midwest. After 40 minutes of warfare, both men were bleeding and unconscous outside the ring. Referee Jimmy McGuire declared the first man to get into the ring and stand on both feet would be the winner. Brown staggered into the ring and won the match.

In other action: Tank Patton beat Bob Slaughter . . . Tom Andrews toppled Mike Cunningham . . . Mike Pappas and Dom Dimino whipped the team of Gene Stephens and Dave Nevins.

CLARKSVILLE, TENN—*Correspondent:* **Zane Booth**—A standing room only crowd saw six-time world champion Lou Thesz successfully defend his version of the Southern heavyweight title against the Mexican Angel after a truly exciting match. Thesz had the crowd screaming berserkly with his masterful exhibition of wrestling genius. The Angel was consistently frustrated by the champion's immense skills.

In other bouts: Dutch Mantell shot down The Brown Bomber . . . Pago Pago whipped The Beast . . . Pago Pago and George Weingraf stopped The Beast and the Green Phantom.

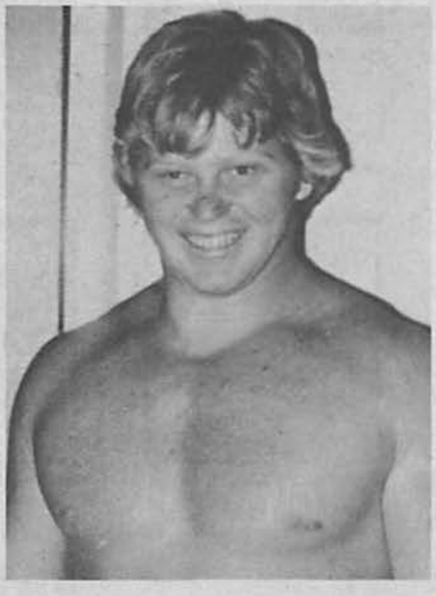
CHARLESTON, S.C.—*Correspondent:* **Melvin Snell**—NWA champion Harley Race and challenger Tony Atlas were both disqualified in the main event. The match had evolved into an alley-fight and both men repeatedly ignored the referee's orders and jumped from the ring to wrestle on the floor, resulting in the double disqualification.

In other action: Paul Jones retained his NWA TV title with his triumph over former champion Baron Von Raschke . . . Swede Hanson was too much for Charlie Fulton.

AWA champion Nick Bockwinkle (above) emptied his bag of tricks to retain his championship honors over former champion Verne Gagne. Greg Valentine (above right) and tag team partner Baron Von Raschke had a tough time holding onto their tag team title when they opposed ex-champions Rick Steamboat and Paul Jones. WWWF king Bob Backlund (below) showed what champions are made of when he wrestled and took the measure of Greek charger, Spiros Arion.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.—*Correspondent:* **Mike Heath**—AWA champ Nick Bockwinkle put his belt on the line against former titlist Verne Gagne. Verne won the first fall, but Bockwinkle, with characteristic treachery, utilized every evil rulebreaker tactic to eventually retain his title. Nick repeatedly jumped off the top rope onto Verne, displeasing the large crowd and Gagne, also.

In other matches: Ray Stephens and Pat Patterson triumphed over Evan Johnson and Steve Olsonoski . . . Super Destroyer II overcame Rufus R. Jones.



HAMPTON, VA.—*Correspondent:* **Russel Watson**—NWA tag team champions Greg Valentine and Baron Von Raschke gave former champions Paul Jones and Rick Steamboat a shot at their titles. As expected, Valentine and Von Raschke double-teamed Jones, who enlisted Steamboat's aid. Rick climbed on the turnbuckle and came down with a hard double-thrust on the Baron. Valentine then worked on Steamboat. The match ended with a one-hour time limit draw.

In other bouts: Ken Patera used rulebreaker tactics to stop Tony Atlas . . . Bryan St. John downed George "Two Ton" Harris . . . Don Kernodle outlasted Frank Monte.

NEW YORK, N.Y.—*Correspondent:* **Virginia Maria Bowes**—A crowd of 22,000 vociferously vehement fans bore witness to the title bout at Madison Square Garden between WWWF champ Bob Backlund and Spiros Arion. The Greek spewed forth a plethora of tasteless tactics and his only defense against the champ seemed to be his foot through the ropes. Backlund posed a series of perfectly executed leg-holds to finally wrap up his title defense.

In other matches, The Lumberjacks took the WWWF tag team title from Dino Bravo and Dominic DeNucci . . . Chief Jay Strongbow downed Baron Scicluna . . . Jack Brisco bested Paul Vachon. □

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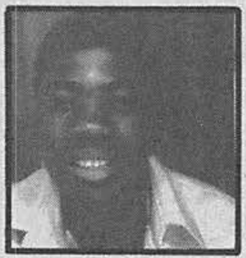

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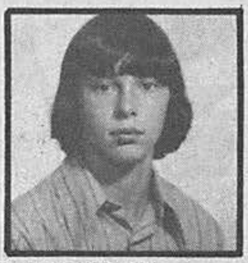

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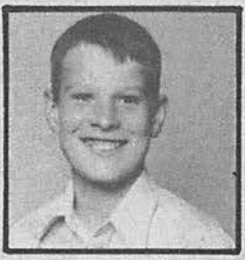

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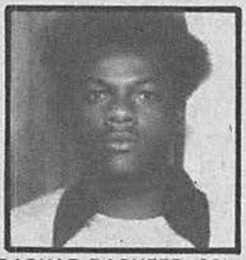

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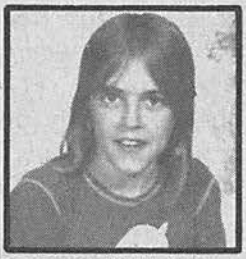

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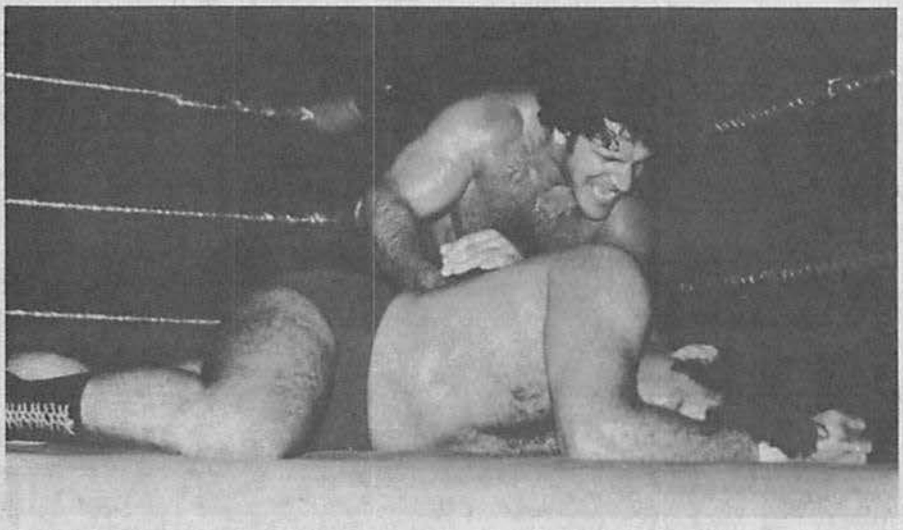
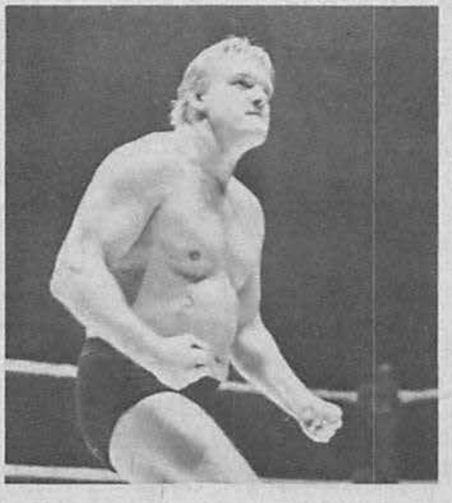
APTER IS LIKE FINE SAUCE

I did not write to talk about a wrestler, but a reporter, Bill Apter. His column "What's Happening" adds to your magazine like sauce adds to spaghetti. He tells it all, no holds barred. He exceeds all the reporters in every other wrestling magazine. His column in Inside Wrestling is also dynamite. And his photos make your magazine even better. To me, Bill Apter is tops.

T.J. MURPHY
Keansburg, N.J.



Bruno Sammartino wrestles Spiros Arion (above) in Bruno's comeback match. Big Johnny Valentine (below) during the days he was a top rated wrestler.



GO TO IT, JOHNNY!

I have to tip my hat off to Johnny Valentine. At first, I wondered if "There's Too Much At Stake To Let Johnny Valentine Retire" (October 1978) would be just another dull sob story.

But the way he stood up to that creep Gary Hart was magnificent. It says a lot about the courage of Johnny to respond to a challenge like that. Some guys would be willing to quit after suffering the terrible injury he did, but Valentine has shown he's a true champion in every sense of the word, an inspiration to people everywhere.

ELOISE SCHAEFER
Pt. Huron, Mich.

WHAT A MAN

I hope you'll print this, because I know you must get a lot of letters about Bruno Sammartino, but I thought I'd write you anyway.

"Bruno Sammartino's Spectacular Return to the WWWF" (October 1978) was really moving. It must be hard for Bruno to try and get back into the swing of things, but his generous charitable acts were heartwarming. It's nice to see that this fine man will give of himself in this world, and not be concerned only with his own pocketbook.

KEVIN COONEY
Charleston, W. Va.

(Continued on page 48)

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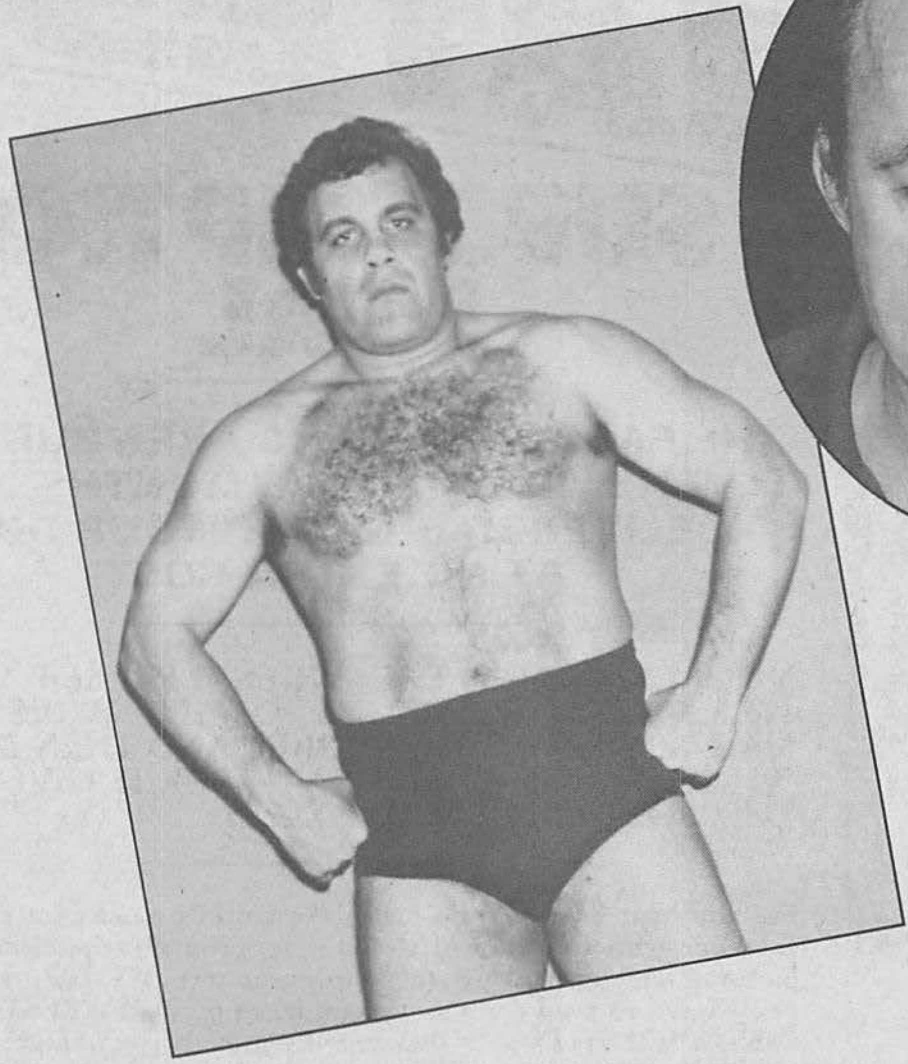
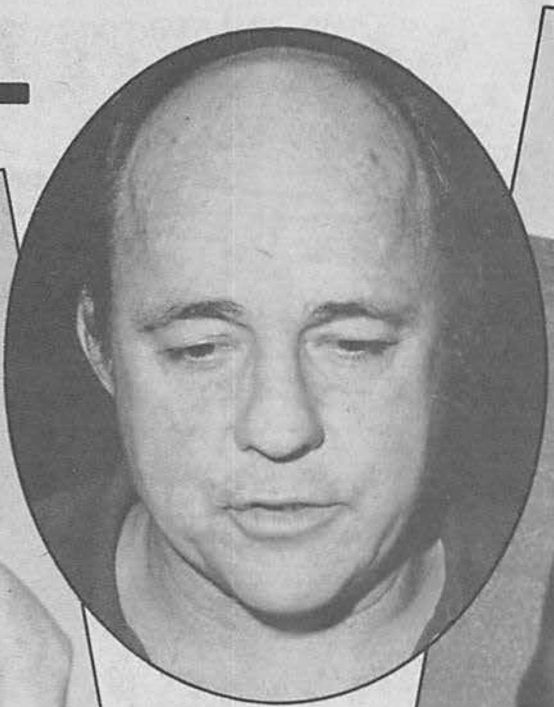
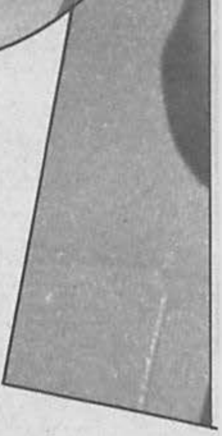






THE S

THE MAN IN the middle is supposed to typify the very best in impartiality. Without a grudge to pursue, a monetary interest to refine, the referee is supposed to calmly maintain the rules.

Oh, there will always be those who claim the ref is showing favoritism. Basically the whiners and complainers, the men who couldn't win on their own merits and so blame the referee.

Still, it is difficult to ignore the charges presently being leveled at Verne Gagne. They reek of corrupt validity, stink with the odor of horrifying truth.

Gagne recently refereed a match between Angelo Mosca and Billy Robinson. After a time-limit, Gagne awarded a decision to Robinson.

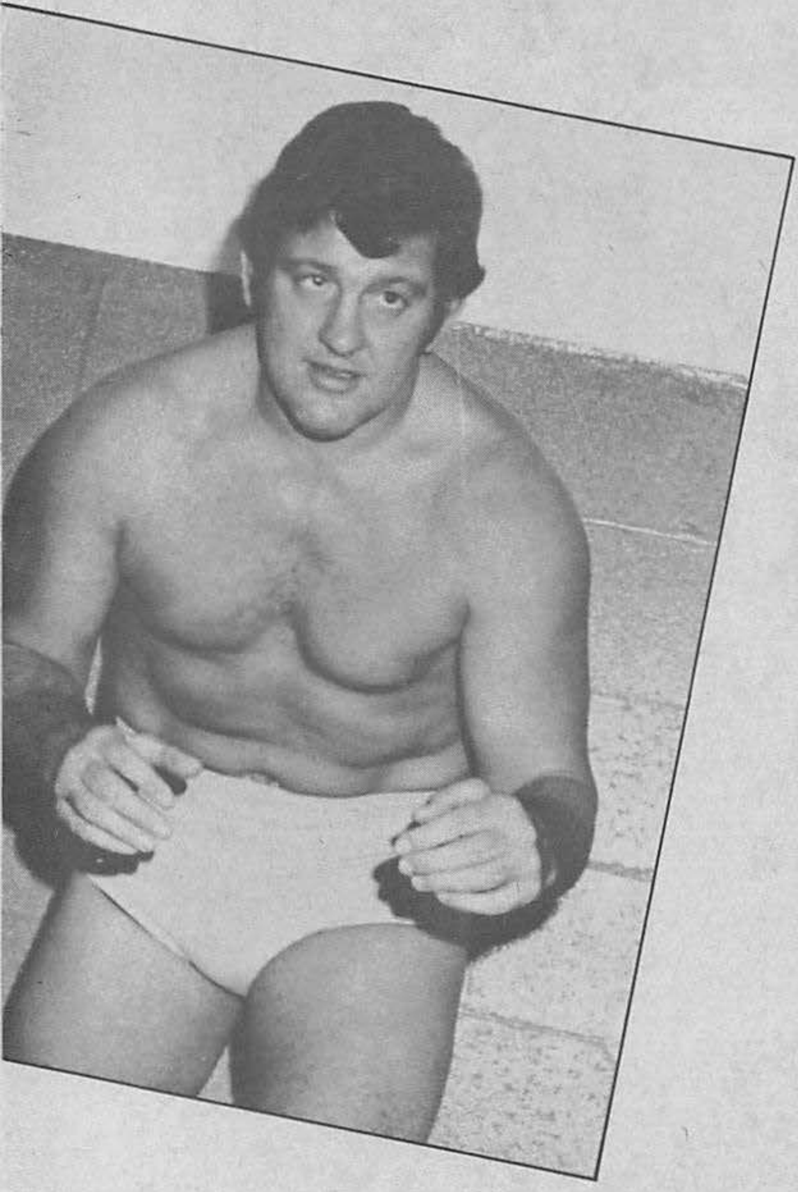
Concededly, that design could do nothing but bring about howls of protest. What draws the decision over the line of usual protests is the possibility that Gagne was refereeing exclusively for his own purpose.

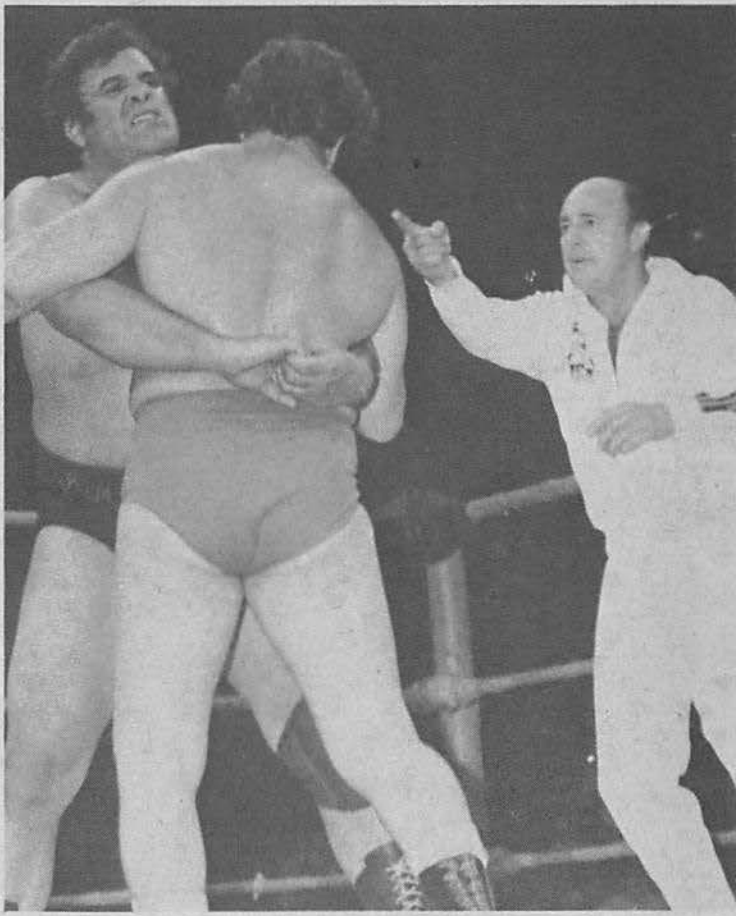
To spy. To gather enough information so he would have no problems when he faced Mosca and Robinson in the future.

Verne Gagne stooping to this level? A disturbing thought, but one which impels further investigation.

First, Gagne has faced Mosca and Robinson numerous times before. There have been persistent rumors that he was behind a conspiracy to keep Robinson from returning to the AWA area. So, Gagne could have taken this refereeing job to update his reports on Robinson, who he has not faced in a while, and Mosca.

But if Gagne despises Robinson, why give him the decision? That answer is obvious. Gagne wants to defuse any criticism about his





Angelo Mosca has a bearhug on Billy Robinson (above). Verne Gagne referees the battle between the two. He will have to face both in the near future.

PY IN MIDDLE

Verne Gagne may be the most cunning grappler in the world. His latest ingenious plot had his two greatest rivals wrestling each other while Verne had the best seat in the house to study them!

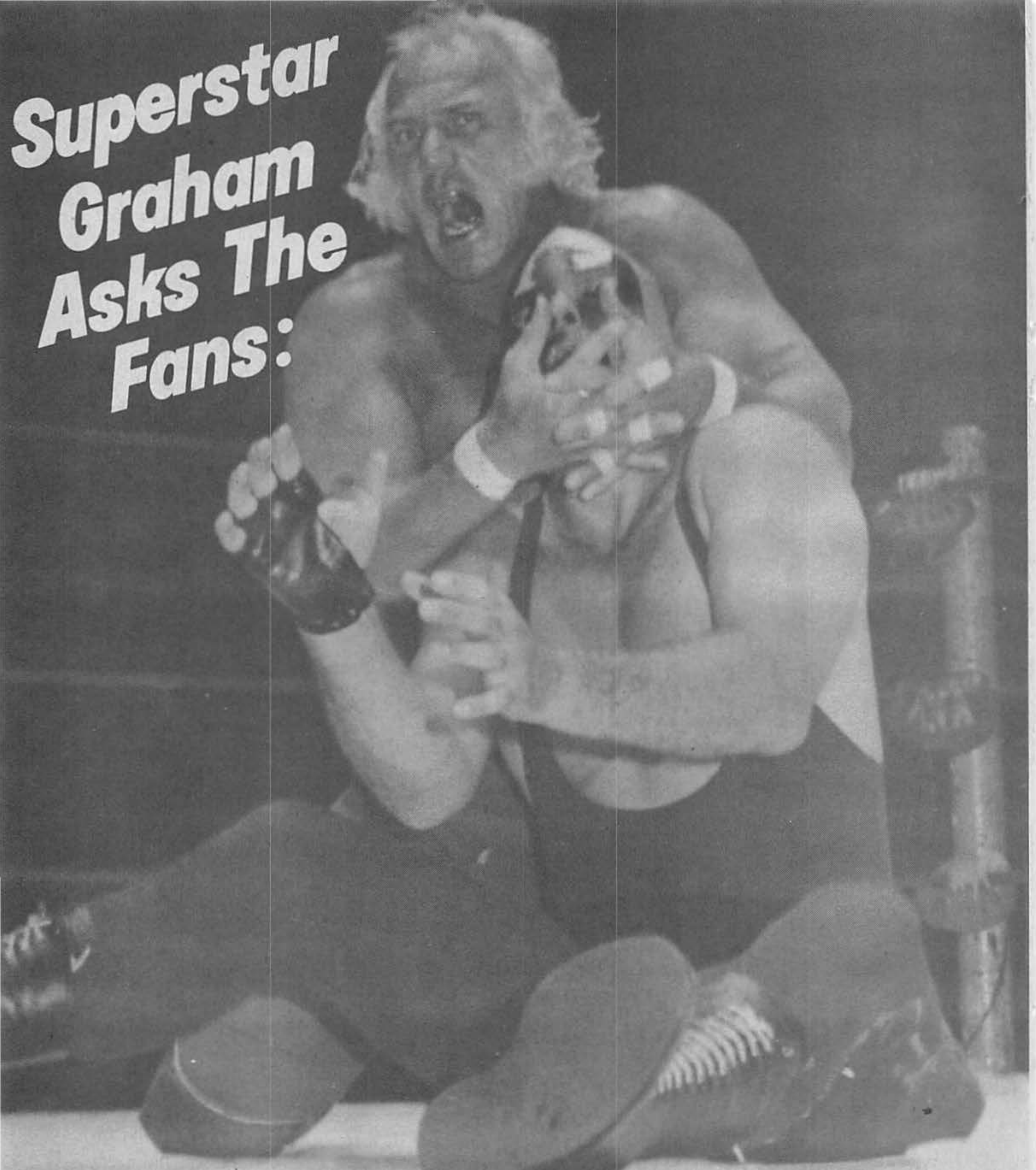
PHOTOS BY TERRANCE MACHALEK

alleged role in Robinson's AWA-related problems. By showing that he was willing to give him the decision, he effectively destroyed that aspect.

And, since Gagne undoubtedly gained a lot of information about the two men, his decision for Robinson understandably infuriated Mosca, instigating an immediate challenge from Mosca to Gagne. An ambush. Quite, quite sinister.

"I gave Robinson the decision because he was the winner, and I had no other reason but that," Gagne snapped defensively. "I don't care what anyone says. I've been in this business too long to do anything underhanded or have to

(Continued on page 50)



Superstar Graham Asks The Fans:

"DID I MAKE A MISTAKE?"

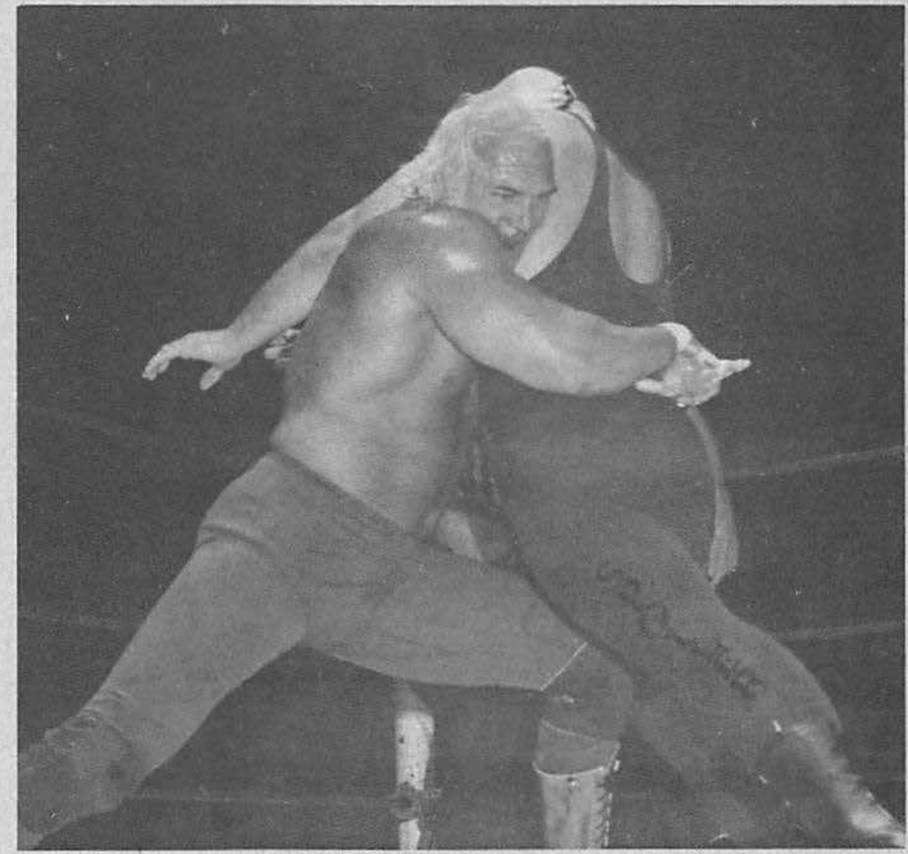
ONE OF THE most sacred of all rulebreaker commandments is they stick together. One rulebreaker does not attack another rulebreaker. And it is an appalling violation for a rulebreaker to take the place of an absent wrestler, so that two villains square off against each other.

When one of The Spoiler's opponents failed to show, the promoter searched for a replacement. The crowd expected some gleaming prince of popularity to enter the ring. Someone they respect, a Dusty Rhodes or an Eddie Graham.

But what you want is not necessarily what you get.

Wonder of wonders, a miracle, a miracle. No, a fiddler didn't leap into the ring. Nor was it an apparition. It was none other than the usually hated Superstar Billy Graham. Graham volunteering to wrestle The Spoiler? Two of wrestling's most sadistic animals meeting each other?

"I just wanted to wrestle a fellow



The incredible power of Superstar Graham's bearhug takes its toll on The Spoiler. Fans were shocked when they saw Graham enter the ring to do battle with the hated masked man.

The last person Superstar Billy Graham would be expected to wrestle is Spoiler. Yet, the two tangled in an incredible brawl. Now that the smoke has cleared, Graham wonders if this bout wasn't the biggest mistake of his career. He's even asking the fans for advice!

PHOTOS BY BRIAN BERKOWITZ

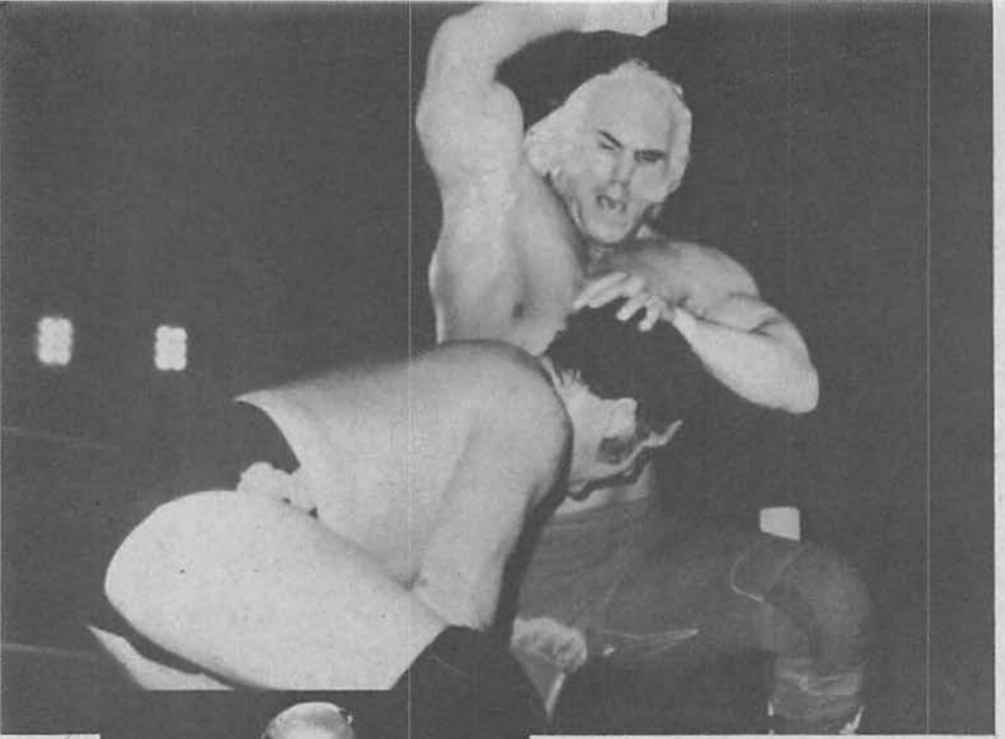
rulebreaker to see what it was like," Graham said. "People are always complaining about how terrible I am and I wanted to see what it was like for myself. I learned.

"But I want to know, and I want an answer. Did I make a mistake by wrestling Spoiler?"

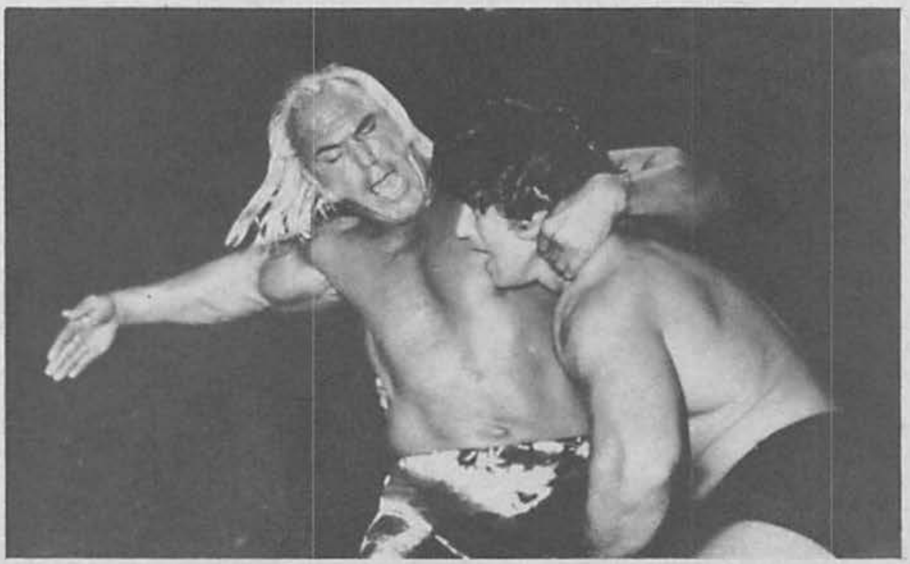
There was a sad, imploring quality to Graham's voice, a desperation which ruptured the usually obnoxious facade. He sincerely wanted to know if he had done wrong by wrestling Spoiler.

But why would Graham think that? Perhaps if he addressed this plaintive question to a convention of rulebreakers, it would make sense. But to ask fans and writers if

Although the fans consider Graham a notorious rulebreaker, he is often mobbed by fans. Here he chats with the people while on a stroll through the streets of New York City.



Many people cheered Graham in his classic encounter against NWA champion Harley Race (above). Superstar tries to make Spoiler quit by using a full nelson (left) from outside the ropes. Only boos come Billy's way against Tony Garea (below).



he, Billy Graham, a man who has expressed only haughty disdain for fans' opinions, is staggering.

"I found out a lot by wrestling Spoiler," Graham said, his voice quiet, subdued. "I saw what all those people have been saying all these years, how horrible it is to face a rulebreaker.

"The Spoiler was unbelievable."

With more than a touch of bitter irony, the match ended with Spoiler disqualified for his horrible tactics. They were typical, intended to produce pain, perhaps a broken arm, maybe even a long stay in the hospital. But again, why would Graham show any remorse for his decision.

"I'm not totally cut off from things," Graham snapped. "I care what people say and think. I've been painted as some horrible person, like the bubonic plague, but I've got feelings.

"When you're a rulebreaker, it's sort of like a club. We have our rules, our moral code. We're not a bunch of deranged lunatics out to cripple, though it happens sometimes, by accident, you know.

"So wrestling a brother made me feel bad. Maybe I shouldn't have done it. I broke one of our sternest rules. And I'd like an opinion, if anyone here has enough of a mind to create one. Did I make a mistake?"

There was an uneasy shuffling, a wincing for a man's vulnerable emotions were being ripped open for viewing. No one came forth with any opinion, which seemed to anger Graham. And also hurt him.

"I'd like fans to write and tell me what they think of what I did," Graham said. "I'd like some feedback on all this. I do want to know what people think about me for violating the club code.

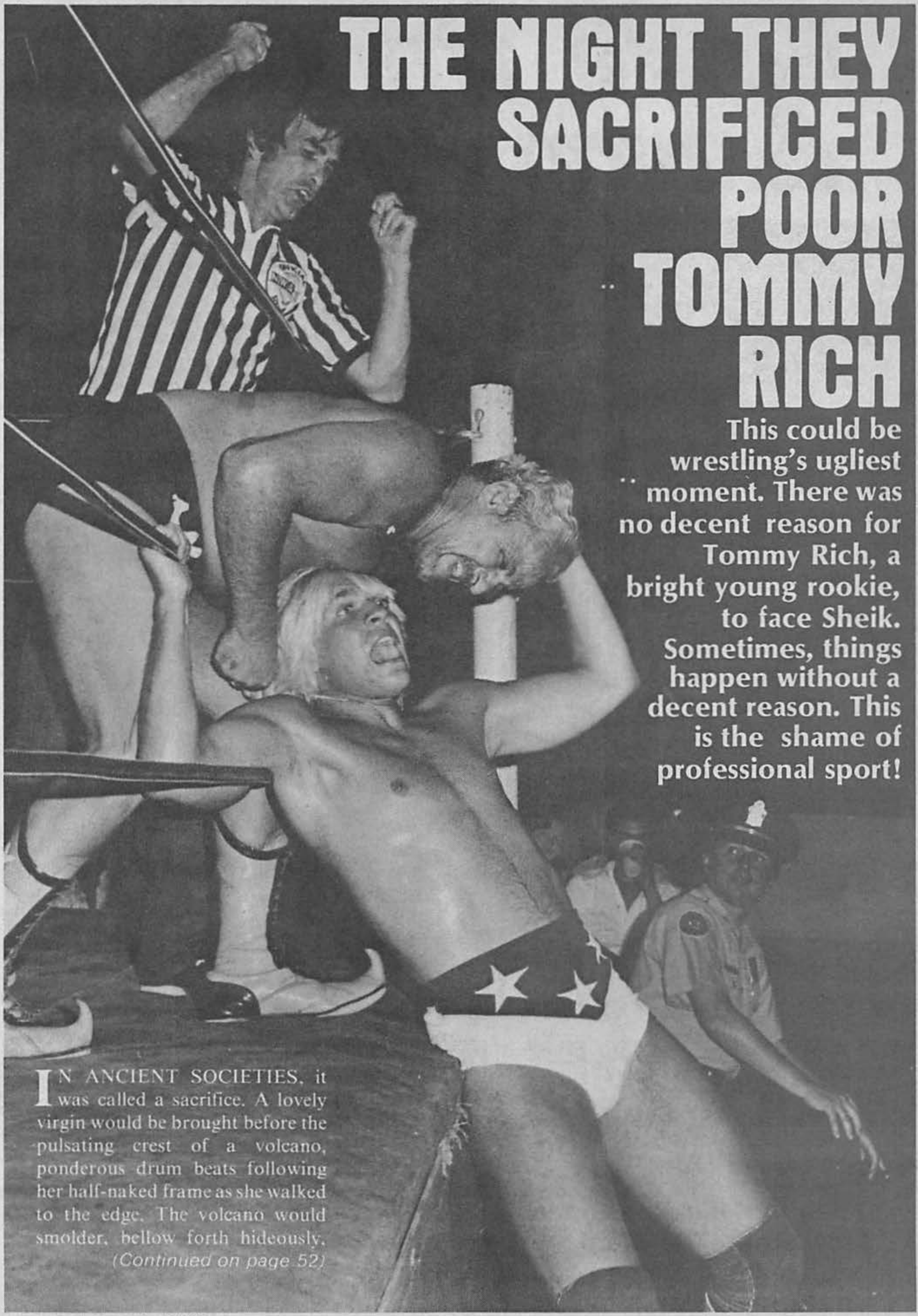
"Sorry about that? Am I sorry for what I did? I'm not sure, that's the truth, I really don't know. I can't say I felt any great love for The Spoiler. He's not the type to create sympathy, you know. But he is a fellow rulebreaker and we got feelings, too, and we get upset, damn, we're human, you know."

So Graham has opened his career up to analysis, and he did it on his own. Whether he made a mistake is difficult to say, because the moral code of the rulebreakers is quite different from that of civilized society. But, judging from Graham's sorrowful features, he is right about one thing.

They do have feelings. □

THE NIGHT THEY SACRIFICED POOR TOMMY RICH

This could be wrestling's ugliest moment. There was no decent reason for Tommy Rich, a bright young rookie, to face Sheik. Sometimes, things happen without a decent reason. This is the shame of professional sport!

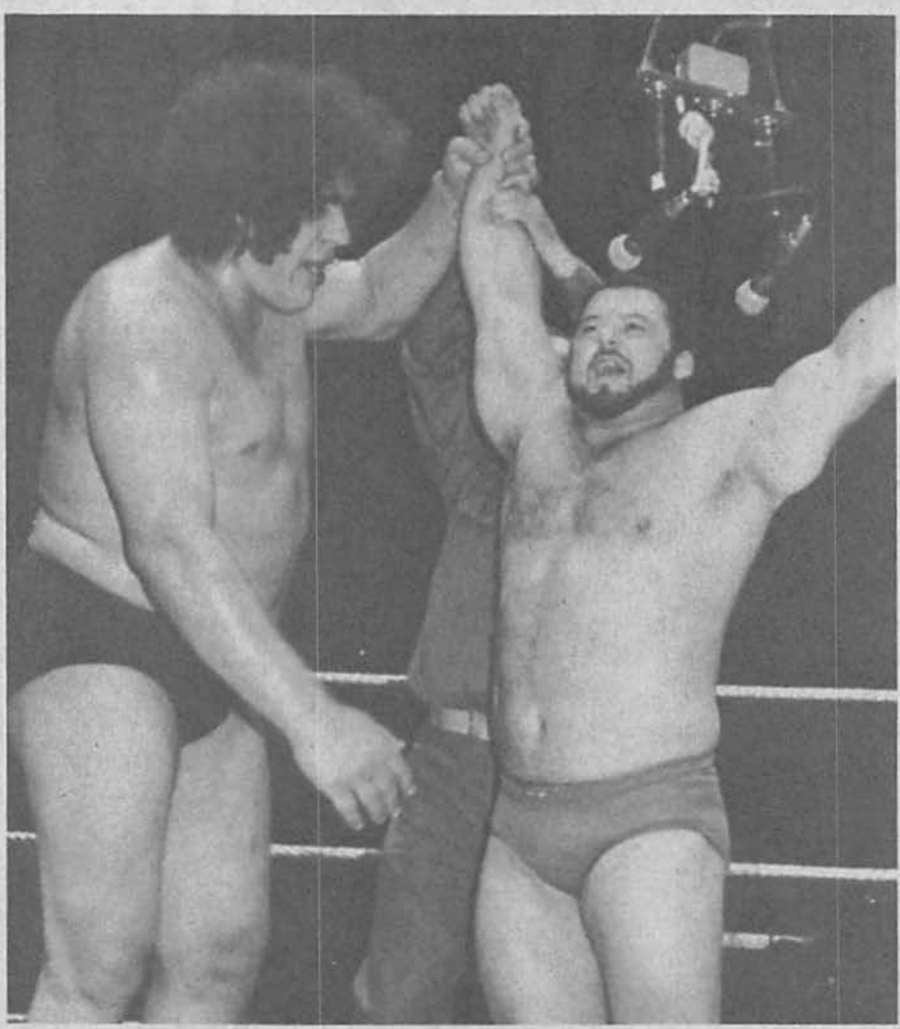


IN ANCIENT SOCIETIES, it was called a sacrifice. A lovely virgin would be brought before the pulsating crest of a volcano, ponderous drum beats following her half-naked frame as she walked to the edge. The volcano would smolder, bellow forth hideously,

(Continued on page 52)

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

Andre the Giant & Ivan Putski:



A photo taken several years ago when Ivan and Andre first became a tag team. It has been over one year since they last put their team efforts together.

EVERY ONCE AND a while, wrestling gives the fans what is the dream tag team. Two years ago, a truly formidable, undoubtedly unbeatable combination was created. Andre the Giant and Ivan Putski. They were utterly amazing, wreaking retribution from the skulls of rulebreakers across the nation.

Fans flocked to see this exciting duo. A title was within reach. And then, the partnership dissolved. Not because of any ill feelings betwen the two men. Simply, Andre had too many individual commitments, appearances which kept intruding on the efficiency of the team.

Ah, but they were brilliant. The wrestling community waited anxiously for them to reunite, to relentlessly make their way toward a federation title.

SOMEONE MUST BE BEFORE THEY DEST

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

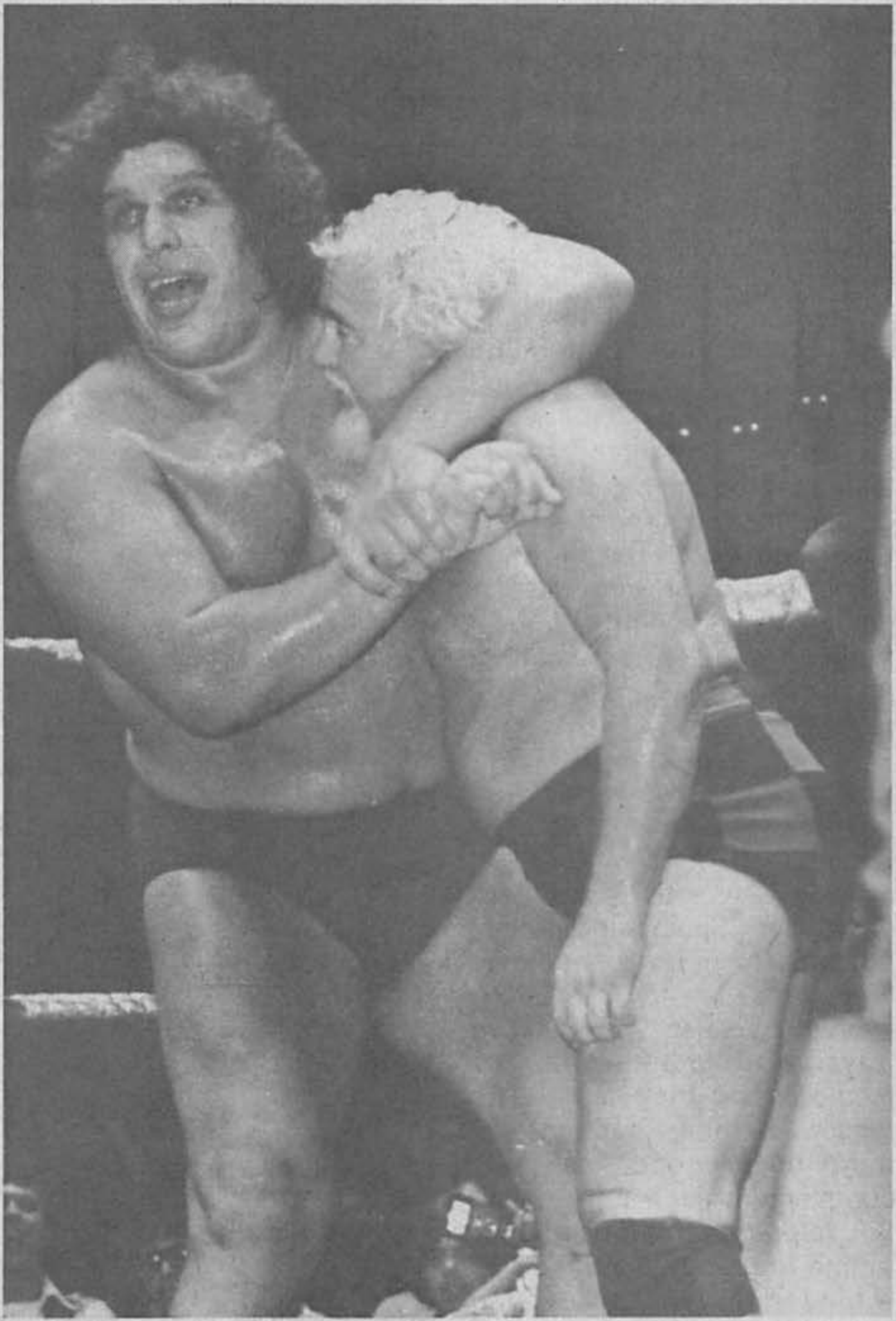
Their first match as a team rocked wrestling to its very roots. Now, Andre the Giant and Ivan Putski once again have formed a tag team. If the pair continue, it is sure to ruin them. Read the shocking reasons for this extraordinary turn of events!

Then, they signed to team together again. The wrestling world was ecstatic. Surely, this signaled a glorious title reign. Surely, they would never lose. Surely, they would show supreme invincibility.

Surely? Interesting how things which seem so well-planned and so perfectly calculated have a way of getting detoured. Such is the tale of Andre the Giant and Ivan Putski.

Illustrative of this startling failure was a tag team match against the Graham brothers, Billy and Luke. Now, there should have been no reason for Andre and Ivan to encounter much difficulty in this bout. They were the superior talents. Their partnership of two years ago indicated their brilliant combinations. It would be a short match, replete with some old-fashioned Graham rule-breaking, some incoherency from Crazy Luke, some chivalry by Andre and Ivan.

Guess again. The team of Putski and Andre sputtered pitifully, the primary case being Putski's continuing inability to work with Andre and fend off the Grahams. In fact, Putski became so battered that Andre had to help him back to the dressing room and enlist the aid



Andre snares "Crazy" Luke Graham in a headlock during the heat of battle. Ivan was badly injured in this bout. Dusty Rhodes replaced him.

AT THEM 'ROY THEMSELVES!

of Dusty Rhodes to finish off the Grahams.

"The rhythm was not there," a disconsolate Putski said. "When we first got together, we could feel a real good blending of our talents. Tonight, I just didn't feel right. I wasn't able to tag Andre to help me. It didn't feel that good. We aren't ready."

Perhaps an adequate lack of preparation was the principal reason for the team's troubles.

"We did not get in enough practice," Andre said. "We were not smooth out there. No matter how much natural talent you may have, when you get two men together, you need to polish the teamwork. It wasn't there tonight."

A tag team in wrestling is truly one of the most intriguing things to watch. When you get two men whose talents so perfectly mesh together, a tag team may be the most thrilling combination in sports. Thus, when you match the towering size of Andre the Giant with the compacted strength of Ivan Putski, it should be devastating. Assuming they can work together.

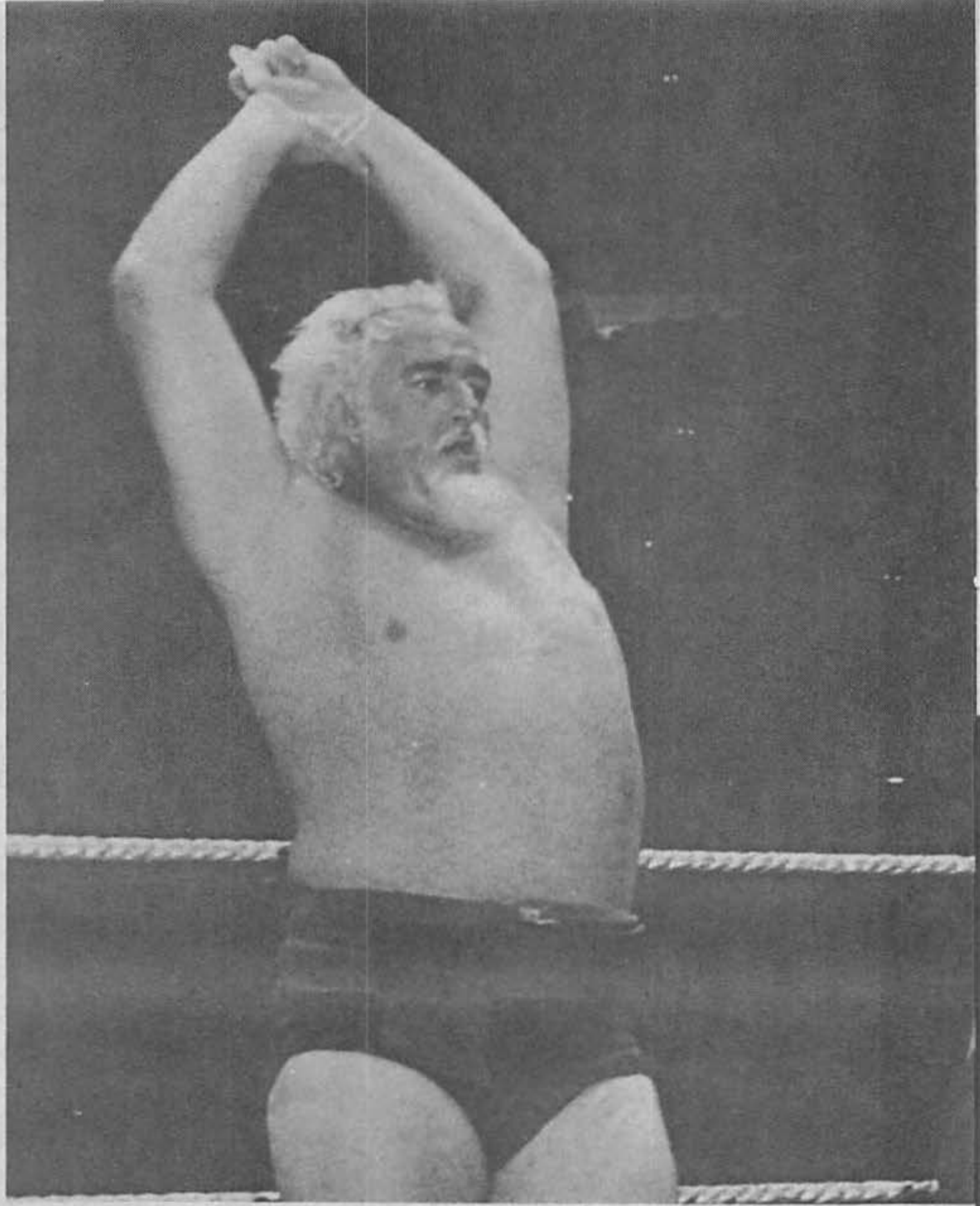
"It was just an off-night," Putski said. "Once we get in a little more practice, we'll be better."

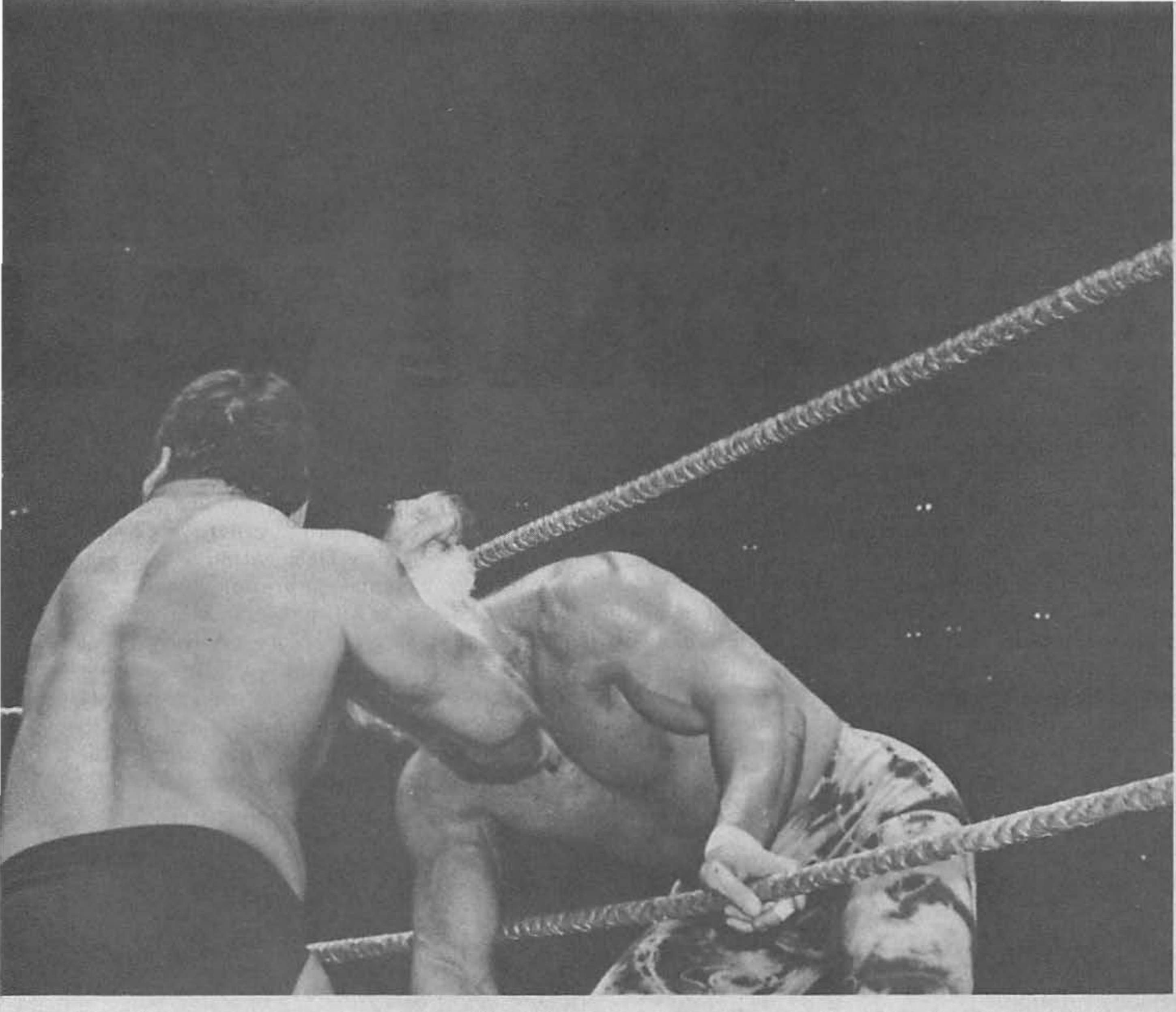
Yet a disquieting word was heard from Superstar Graham, not usually given to quotable comments:

"Just because you got two guys with their skills, as mediocre as they are, is no reason to think that together they'll be any good. They don't complement each other, man. You're putting two mush-heads in one ring and telling them to win when they ain't ready. And those two guys ain't got enough upstairs to make it together."

Almost quotable. But Graham does seize upon one essential element.

It is entirely possible that Putski and Andre are too stubborn to work effectively as a tag team. It is quite possible that these two men, while on paper are effective, in person just don't make it. Perhaps they are too set in their ways, too unwilling to minimize certain aspects of their game for the good of the team. A possibility which both reject, with considerable vehemence.





Above: Ivan concentrates on Superstar while Luke prepares to batter the "Super Pole." Left: The Giant is about to whip Luke across the ring. Below: Ivan tests the strength of Superstar.

"Just because we have one bad night, everyone wants to jump on us and say we are a bad team," Putski said irritably. "Are we not allowed to have one bad night? If this happened to anyone else, it would have been understood that not enough practice had been done and that the timing was off.

"But when it is Andre the Giant and Ivan Putski, we are not given any leeway. That is wrong, you know?"

This might be the very root of the problem. Because of Andre's unbeaten record and Putski's continued brilliance, too much is demanded of them. They are placed on a level of expectation not accorded any other team. People expect them to pulverize an opponent, to be immune to any mistakes, to even the semblance of difficulty.

After all, they are only human.

"We will get our team working well and then we will be triumphant time and again," Andre said insistently. "There is no doubt about that."

But what if the team just won't work? What if Andre and Ivan push themselves, demand that they blend dissimilar pieces into one jagged piece? What if this classic example of a tag team becomes a classic example of two athletic geniuses unable to work together?

Have Ivan Putski and Andre the Giant stepped on the road of stubborness, with only disaster awaiting them? □

"WHO TH DALE VAL

ITS BEEN A while since the ruthless form of Bruiser Brodie disfigured the Texas landscape. When Brodie was depositing his singular brand of treachery into the arenas of the state, he faced different wrestlers, different names pursuing different ambitions.

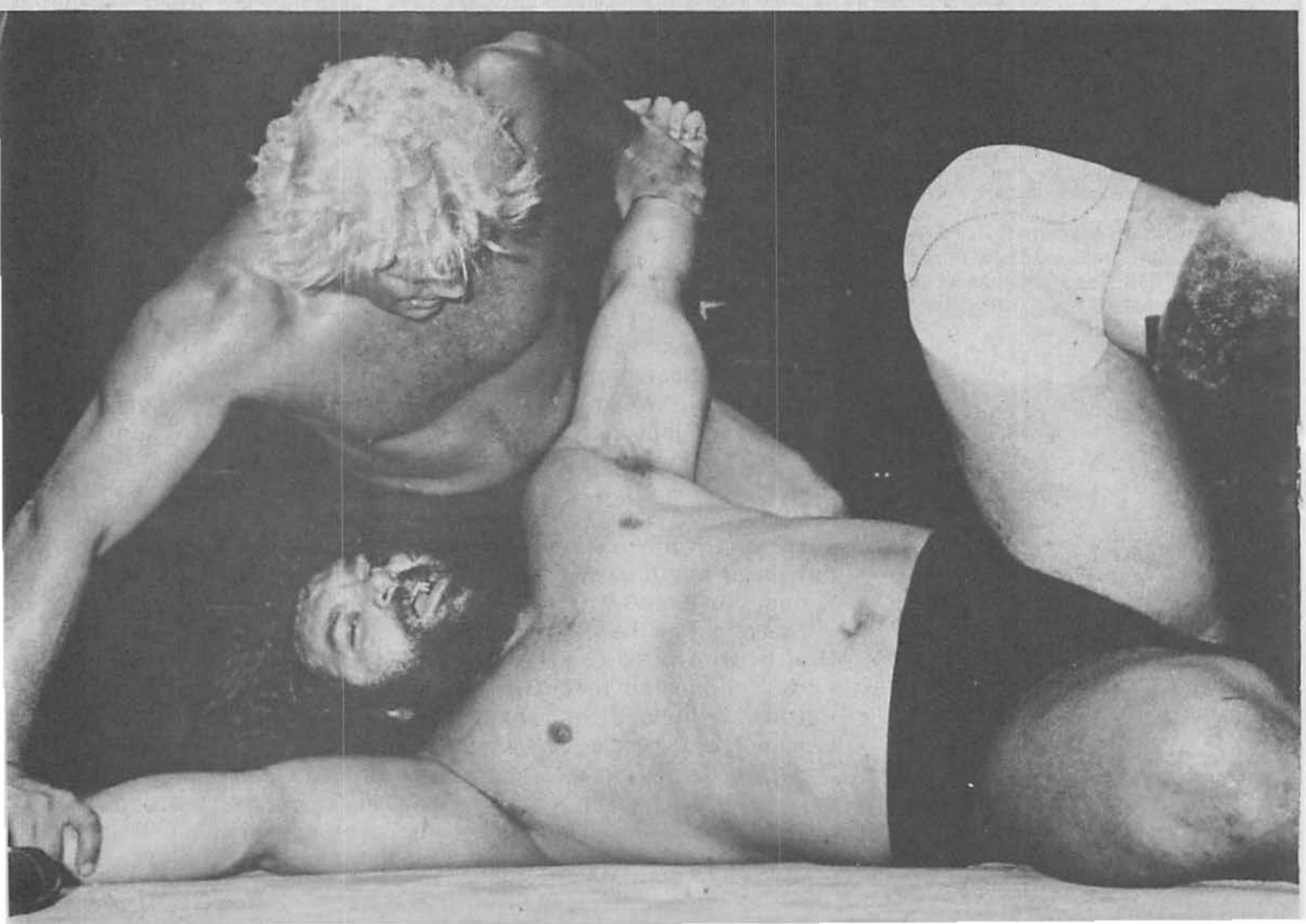
Brodie's been away on a grand world tour. He remembers a man named Valentine, a forceful personality who struck terror into the black souls of the rulebreakers. Johnny Valentine.

So, when Brodie returned to Texas and was told he'd be battling Valentine, his ugly face creased in bewilderment. He had heard about Johnny's tragic plane crash, knew the man could only participate from the sidelines. So he thought it was some sort of vicious joke being practiced upon him.

It was with much surprise that Brodie discovered he was *indeed* wrestling a Valentine. *Dale* Valentine. And upon learning this, he let loose with a litany of mocking reproach.

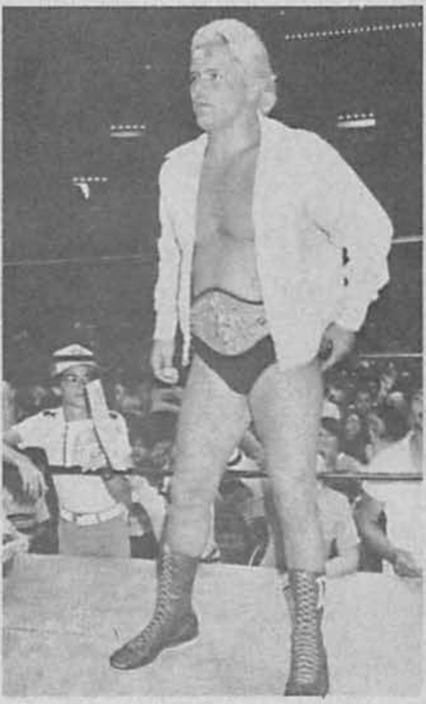
"Who the hell is Dale Valentine?" Bruiser Brodie sneered evilly. "I remember Johnny. I'd wrestle him, if he could walk, but I ain't gonna wrestle no young punk without a reputation. This guy must be making his dough on his brother's name, not his."

Brodie's villifying reaction must be understood. He is a proud man with a large ego, not that different from many other wrestlers. Battling Dale Valentine, a young, promising grappler who had already proven himself by capturing the Texas Heavyweight title, rankled Brodie. He thought it beneath him, felt he had already proven himself and didn't need to act as a testing ground for inexperienced wrestlers.



PHOTOS BY JIM CALDWELL

IE HELL IS ENTINE?”



Dale Valentine (right) enters the ring to do battle against Bruiser Brodie. Dale is the winner in a test of strength (below left) and also shows Brodie how vicious he can be if necessary (below).

“I shouldn't be wrestling with this boy,” Brodie snapped. “I wrestle men, not children.”

When word of Brodie's oafish remarks reached Dale, he smiled knowingly.

“I expected him to say something like that,” Dale replied, still smiling. “Johnny's told me all about that Brodie fellow, so I expected him to say something

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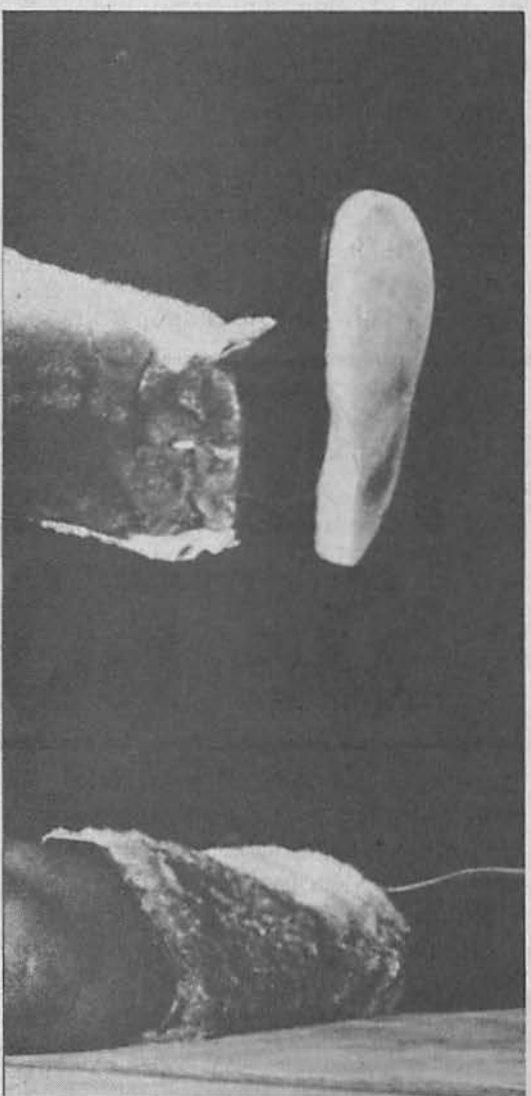
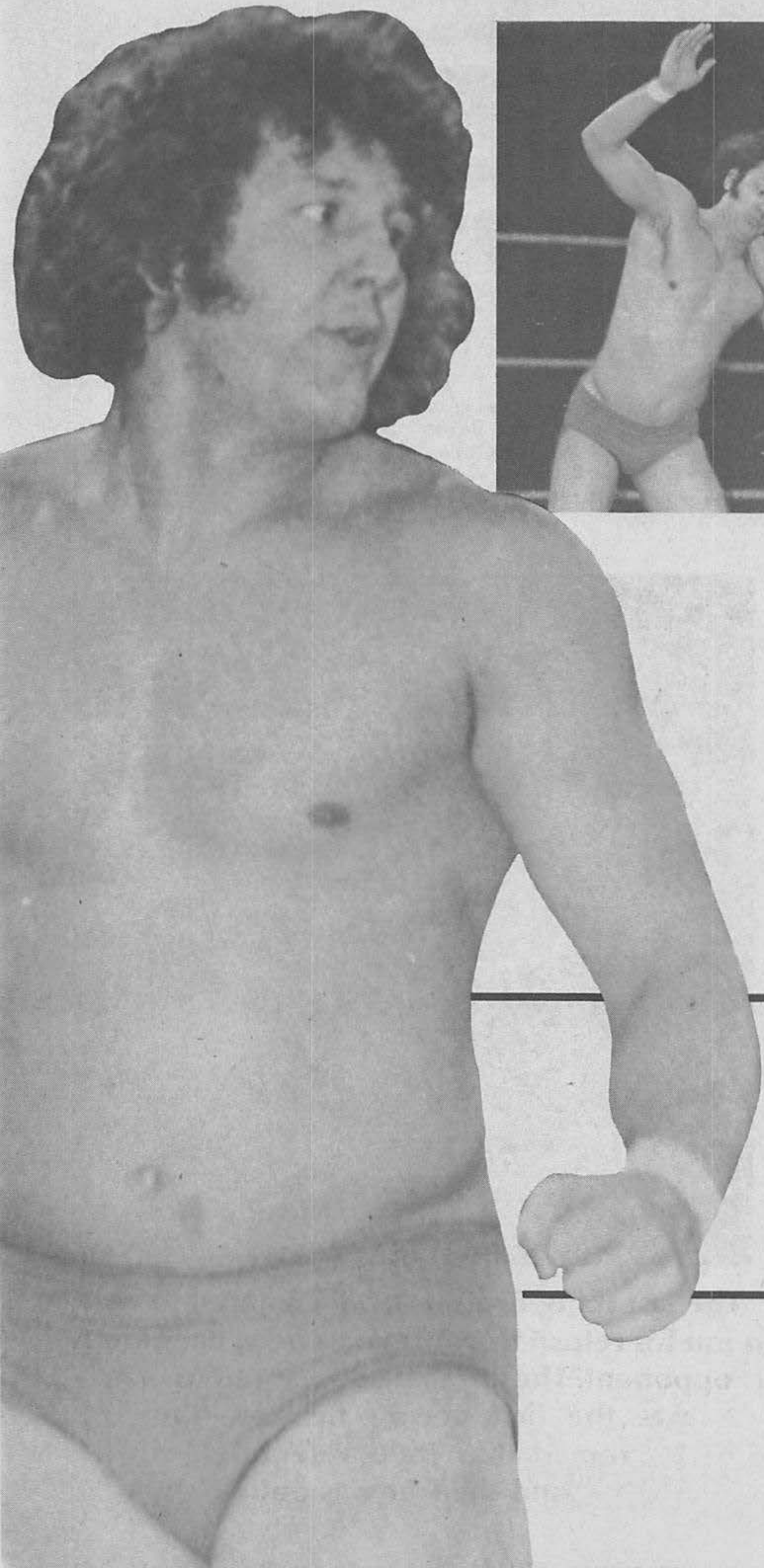
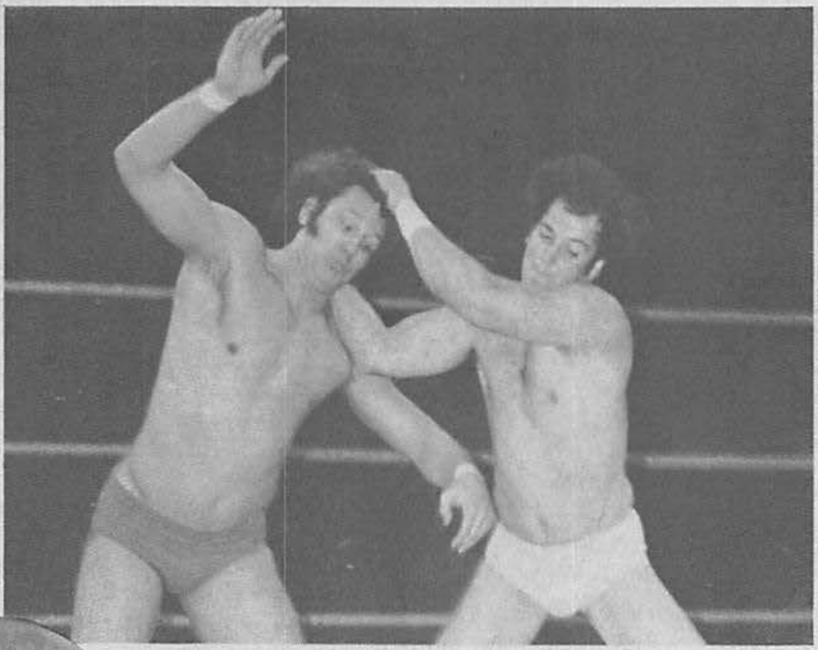


The last thing Bruiser Brodie wanted to see upon his return to Texas was a new, dangerous opponent. The last thing he wanted to see was the first person he saw—the remarkable Dale Valentine. And the war was on!





WHERE ONCE AN intelligent gleam danced in the large eyes, now only a dazed, mechanical stare drilled outward. Where once the full lips formed coherent, thoughtful phrases, now the twitching clumps of flesh constructed fragmented vowels and syllables wich floated formlessly into the air.

Such specimens were flaunted with patriotic indignation when prisoners of war were first released from Korean jails back in the 1950s. Bob Orton Jr. was not captured

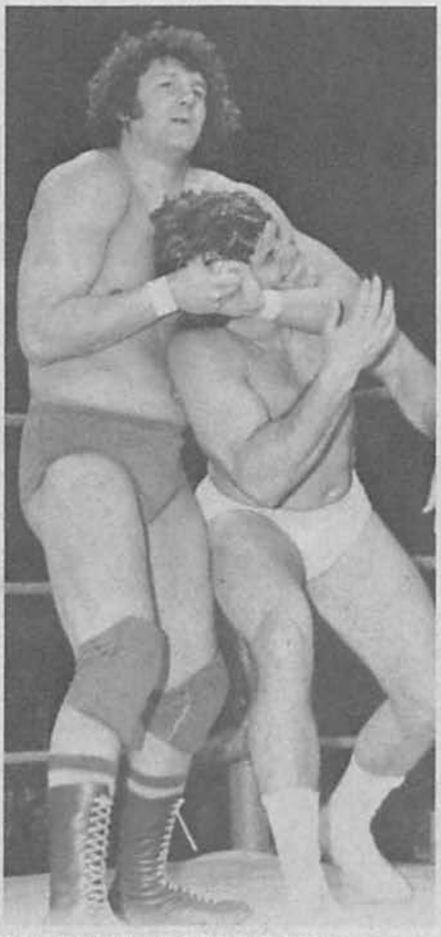
THE BR
OF BO

by enemy solders. The expert brainwashing was conducted by the ugly, rapacious organism commonly known as Bobby Heenan.

Brainwashing. The distorting evil spoken about in guarded whispers by government

Once, Bob Orton Jr. was the fair-haired boy of wrestling. Then, ambition clouded his judgement and he became a rulebreaker. Now, he's under the influence of Bobby Heenan. Those who once loved Orton can now only look to the future with dread

Left, opposite page: After being fouled repeatedly by Orton, Greg Gagne begins to play at Bob's vicious game. Right: Orton facelocks Jimmy Brunzell.



PHOTOS BY ROGER DEEM

AINWASHING B ORTON JR.

agencies or described with chilling vividness in spy novels.

Brainwashing. Bob Orton Jr. is the latest victim of brainwashing. From decent, scientific wrestler, he has been transformed into a hardened, ruthless rulebreaker.

Bob Orton Jr. Rulebreaker. Villain par excellence. Somehow it doesn't make sense, it is as conflicting as the sight of this dulled man being led down the vicious path of evil by the disgusting pied piper Bobby Heenan.

Orton demonstrated this horrible transformation in a match against Jim Brunzell. Suffice to say that Brunzell, though surprised, was able to handle Orton. But the match, though it clearly shows Orton's change, is not the whole story.

"I was really upset to see a man like Bob Orton turn total rulebreaker," Brunzell said. "What a shame. He had a chance to be one of the greats in scientific wrestling and he just threw it away. That creep Heenan. Something should be done about him."

Unfortunately, the constitution guarantees freedoms to all peoples, though Heenan is certainly more than just a man—he's part human, part cobra, part rat. The plague he has brought to Bob Orton is horrifying.

"I'm, uh, very happy to have Bobby, uh, Heenan as my manager," Orton said haltingly, stumbling over the words. "He'll do a lot for my career and I'm, uh, real pleased to have him guiding me."

At this point, Orton glanced apprehensively at Heenan, who nodded briskly and gestured for Orton to continue. But the mouth just opened, hung there, suspended without thinking, then closed. A slight convulsive shudder and Orton's eyes leveled leadenly to the floor.

Reddening, Heenan tried to fill the uneasy silence.

"Orton has been misdirected but now, right now, he's on his way to becoming federation champ and turning the tails of the lame scientific wrestlers right up their you-know-whats," Heenan giggled. "Bob has never been happier, has never shown greater promise.

"Now he is able to live up to his potential, right, Bobby," Orton nodded, eyes still fixed on the floor.

Several of Orton's former friends tried to convince him to elude the slimy grasp of Heenan.

"I warned him about Heenan," said one wrestler. "Bob has always kind of fluctuated between scientific wrestler and rulebreaker, but he always had enough sense to come back. Now, I don't know. He's gone over the edge."

But it seems hopeless. Orton has fallen under Heenan's spell. He is walking irrevocably down the path of viciousness. There is no turning back.

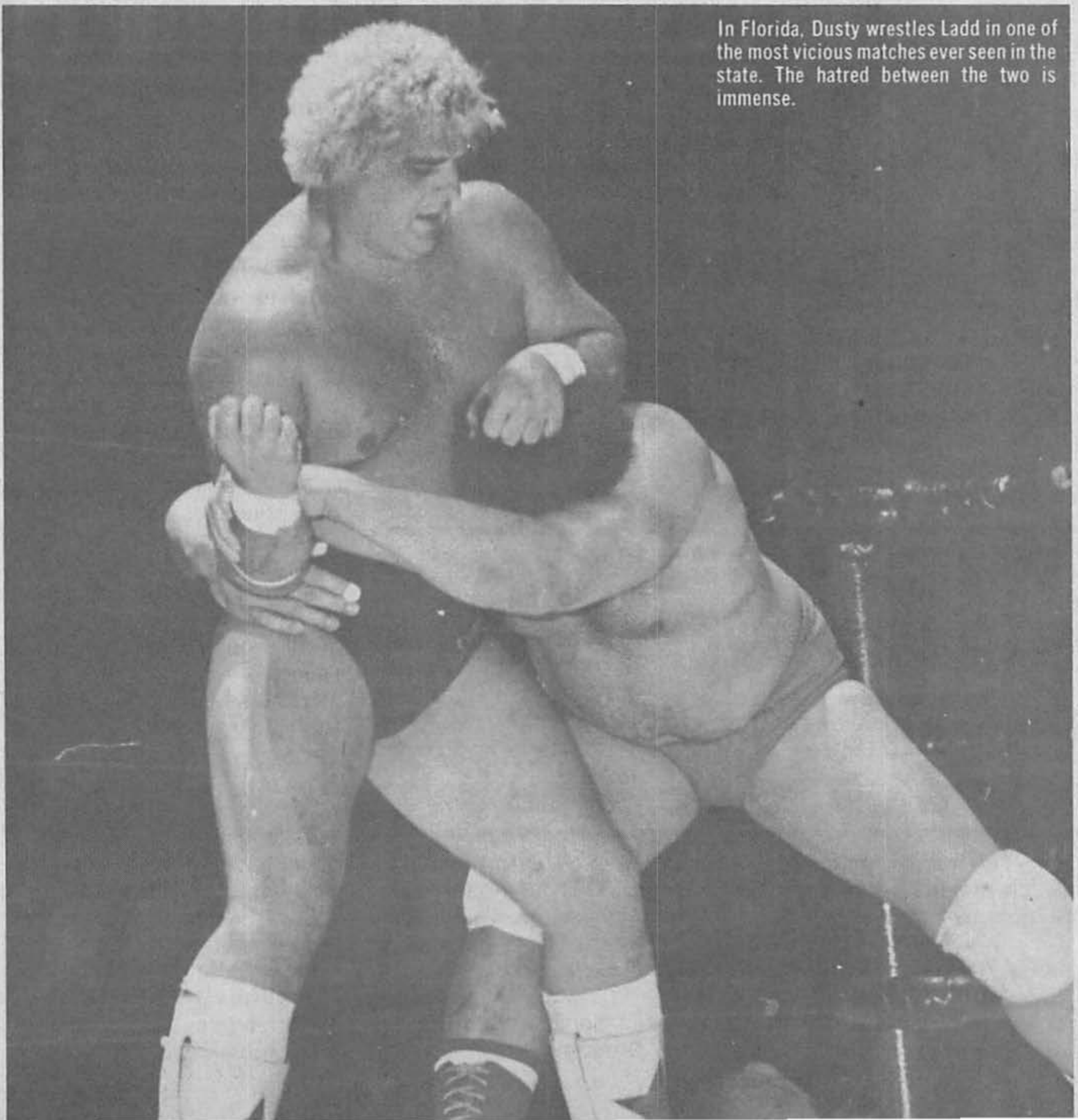
Brainwashing. □

Why Ernie Ladd Says: "I'LL GO A

HANDS. THICK, CLAWING limbs soaked in blood and sweat, watery crimson dribbling down forearms and onto the battered canvas. Hands. Three hands. One of the hands brought about wrestling's newest venemous feud, a feud which will transport Ernie Ladd across state lines, over oceans, into foreign nations, only to seek vengeance.

"I'll go anywhere in the world to whip that cowardly Dusty Rhodes," Ladd threatened, unraveling his huge, 6-9 frame up into a towering mountain of terror. "Anywhere."

Hands. Three hands. One hand belonged to Dusty Rhodes. Months ago, when he and Ladd were tag team



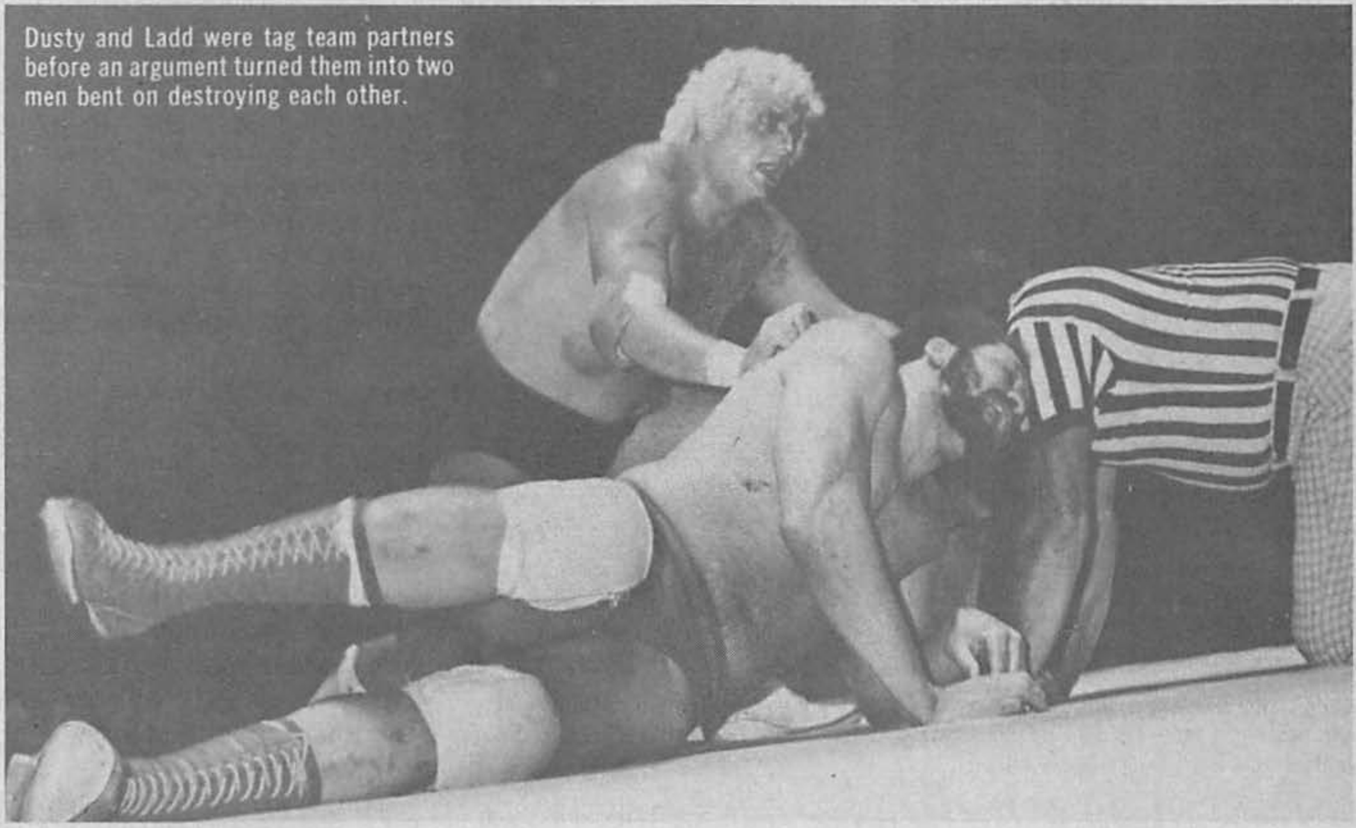
In Florida, Dusty wrestles Ladd in one of the most vicious matches ever seen in the state. The hatred between the two is immense.

partners in Florida, the feud was born. It was born in a match against mediocrities, men they should have whipped. But they didn't, instead suffering a defeat far worse than any the referee could administer.

Hands. One hand. The pale limb of Rhodes outstretched toward his partner, begging for a tag, relief, fingers quavering excruciatingly, mouth forming tormented ovals of suppliance. Fingers straining, straining in vain desperation to touch the dark, thick fingers of Ernie Ladd. The hands never touched, dooming Rhodes to an awful whipping.

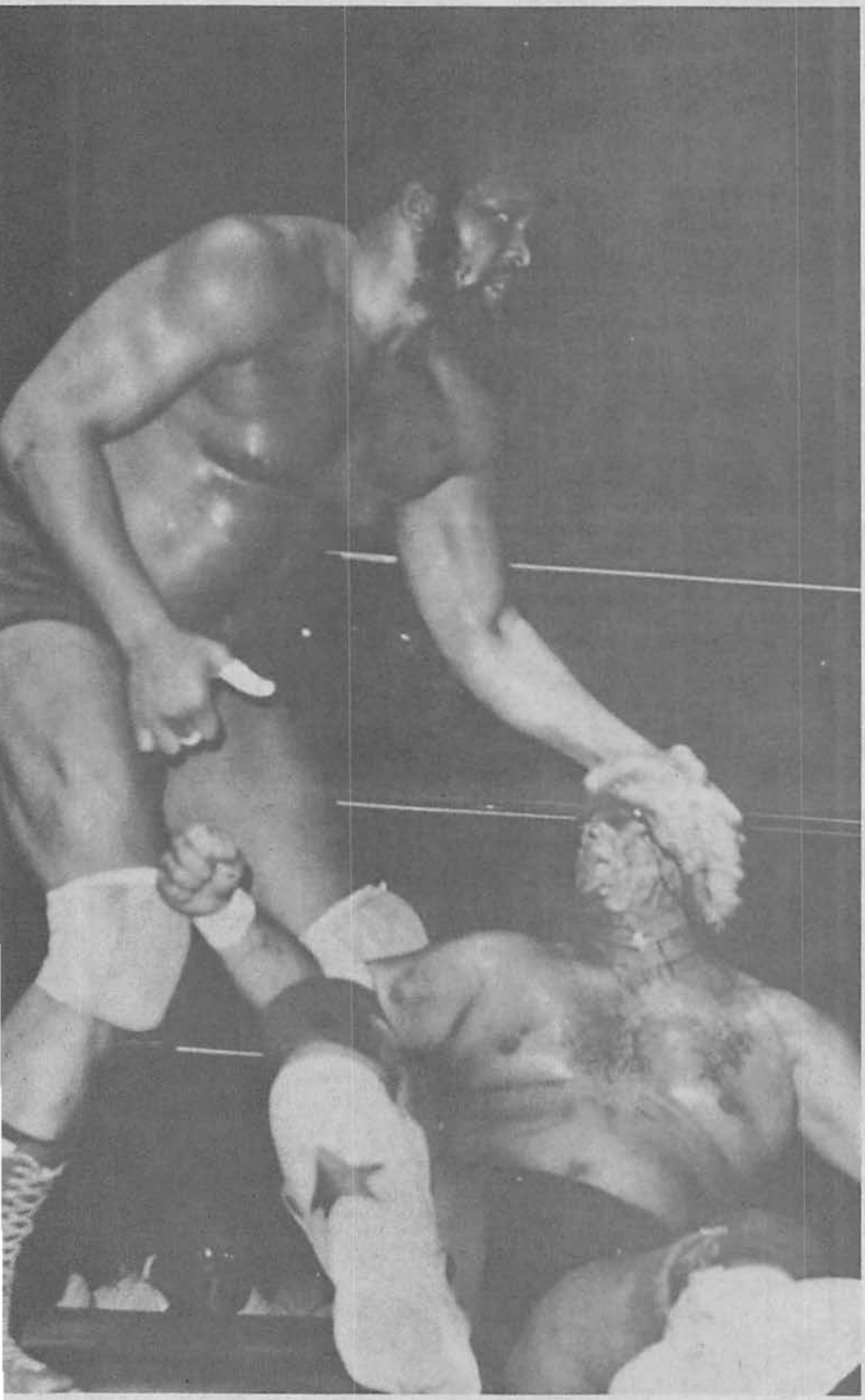
At Atlanta's Omni, Ladd is about to jam his "injured" taped thumb into Dusty's eyes. The "injury" has lasted 5 years.

NYWHERE TO DESTROY DUSTY RHODES!"



Dusty and Ladd were tag team partners before an argument turned them into two men bent on destroying each other.

The time has come for the final showdown between Ernie Ladd and Dusty Rhodes. The two men have to face each other. It is doubtful both men will survive their titanic confrontation



Ladd renders Dusty a bloody mess as he keeps sticking his thumb into Dusty's eyes. Rhodes soon recovers and begins beating Ladd, but Ladd's fury refuses to die no matter how hard Dusty beats him.

"He refused to help me out, that's all," Dusty snarled in hateful recollection.

"He was too busy to help me out, that coward didn't want to fight, because he's afraid," counters Ladd. "He knows he's a coward and he's gonna get his face smashed in. He's afraid, afraid to wrestle, afraid to get beat up, just afraid, man."

Hands. Two hands. Now four hands. Wrapped around purpling throats, ripping at gored faces and bloodied foreheads. Four hands. Four hands of revenge.

"I wanted to whip that coward so bad. Hey, you guys make that fat toad Rhodes into somethin' special, hah," Ladd snorted in sardonic derision. "Look at his career. He ever been champ? No, never, not even with all those title matches he's gotten.

"Wanna know why that ugly bloated cow-ass ain't never been champ. 'Cause he's afraid! To be champ you gotta want to mess in the ring. You can't be afraid of gettin' hurt or having your pretty face rearranged. You got to have the killer instinct, man. Rhodes ain't got that."

Whatever Ladd may think of Rhodes, it was appreciably different when they were partners some time back in Florida. Then, Ladd was full of praise for his surprisingly agile partner. There was never a question of Rhodes' courage. Until the night the hands failed to touch; and Ladd swore mindless vengeance. A vengeance which has made him a mindless, irrational animal. A vengeance no match could ever exorcise. Until the two hands met in Atlanta's Omni, before a packed crowd of screaming, hoarse fans driven into berserk exhortations by the gory war which exploded before him.

Hands. They finally met. And were parted after a sickening display of sadistic torture left both men reddened hunks of torn tissue.

"That coward has escaped me again 'cause he left the ring alive," Ladd wheezed through his swollen stomach. "He ain't gonna get far, I tell you. That mealy-mouthed cowardly fool has gotten away one last time

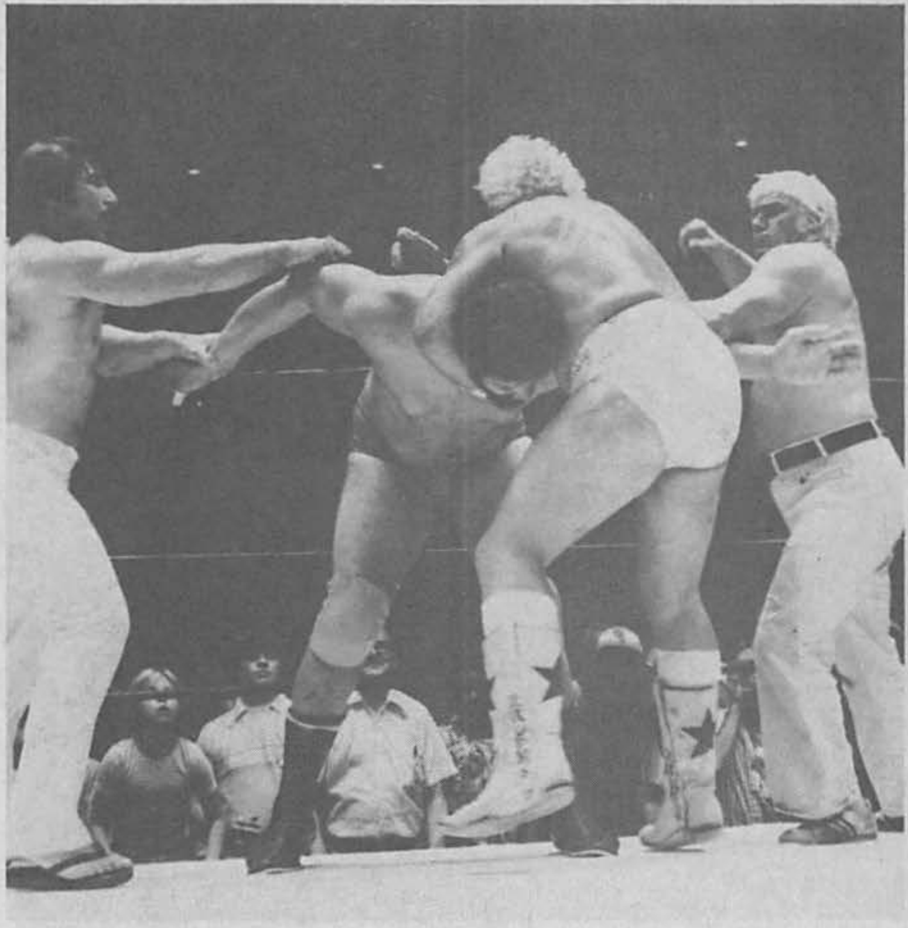
and this next time, if I have to meet that fat slob in an alley or on top of a mountain, I'll show the whole damn world what he's made of.

"Jello, baby! He has whipped cream for his spine and jello for a brain."

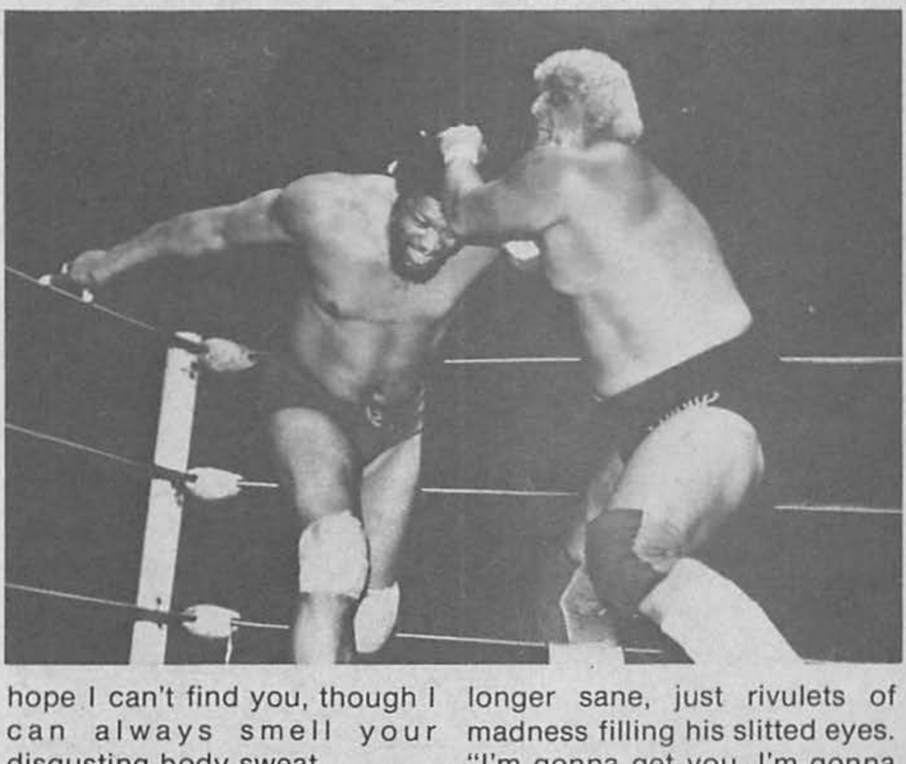
Brave words, especially from a man who has just finished a torturous double disqualification match. Very brave words, indeed.

"Coward? He calls me a coward and he's the one who did me in that night in Florida, he calls me a coward," Dusty bellowed with monstrous hatred, his eyes glazed, mouth forming twitching, silent threats.

"I mangled his flesh and ripped that ugly face into a pile of pudding." Dusty attempted a laugh, but only produced a coughing rattle of brittle triumph. "I don't care if he wants to follow me anywhere. Hey, I'n not afraid of him."



In Florida, wrestlers try to break up the furious Ladd and Rhodes the night they broke up their tag team and began their war (above). In the most recent battle in Georgia, Dusty is in charge for the moment (below) as he prepares to slam Ladd's head into the corner.



The match was so violent, so close, neither wrestler could claim victory. From the first second, the two men hurtled themselves at each other like deranged animals protecting their young. It was an absolutely unbelievable match, a match which settled nothing, though nearly killing the two combatants.

"Next time I'm goin' to get him," Ladd said, still unable to do more than sit up. "He can't hide, doesn't he see that. He can run and he can run and he can shoot off his cowardly mouth, but in the end, baby, I'm goin' find him. I'm goin' to pay him back for the cowardly way he let me get beat up that night while he's signing autographs for his stupid fans.

"I'm going to get him. You can't sleep again, Dusty the Coward. Put a pillow over your ugly face and get a different wardrobe or grow a beard and hope I can't find you, though I can always smell your disgusting body sweat.

"You're a dead man, Dusty Rhodes," Ladd screamed, no longer sane, just rivulets of madness filling his slitted eyes. "I'm gonna get you. I'm gonna kill you, Dusty Rhodes."

And the war goes on. □

In one of the few moments he was really looking like the Ken Patera of old, the black haired Patera—we think—chokes the breath from the masked sensation.

WHERE ONCE CURLY blond hair fluttered lazily against the muscled neck, now short black hair clung stolidly atop the wide forehead. The eyes seemed to have softened, were absent of the drilling viciousness, a gentler, though far from kind, squint of the eyes, mouth pursed thoughtfully, not savagely.

If we told you who this man is, or rather, who we think he is, you might take issue with the above description. In fact, we're not entirely sure who this man is. And, to complicate matters further, there arose more than a little doubt as to the identity of his opponent.

Before we get ahead of ourselves, we should tell you who the two men were, or at

MASCA
WE

least supposedly were: Ken Patera and Mil Mascaras.

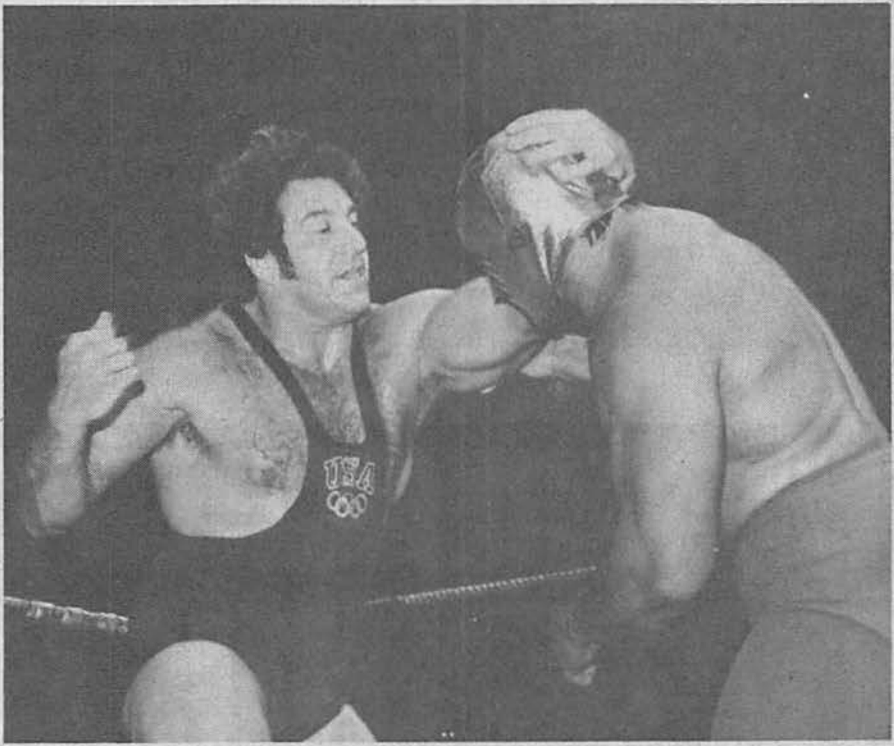
What? Ken Patera with short dark hair, almost placid eyes, mouth not pulled back to reveal an ugly sneer? Yes—we think.

You see, no one is really certain that it was Ken Patera.

"It did not look like Patera," said the man who was supposedly Mil Mascaras. "Patera has that long blond hair and tries to gouge your eyeballs. This man I wrestled was not that mean. Very strange."

Okay, let's try and settle this. Was it Ken Patera or not?

It was supposed to be a battle to the finish—Mil Mascaras against Ken Patera. Yet, were the two wrestlers who appeared in the ring the men the fans knew so well? Can this incredible confusion ever be explained?



The fans and Patera verbally battle each other and Patera comes out on the winning end (above). His fist is about to connect with Mascaras' head (right).

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

RAS VS. PATERA... THINK?

The masked man who we think is Mil Mascaras headlocks who we think is Patera. This match proved to be confusing for everyone!

"Of course I'm Ken Patera, what a ridiculous question," Patera snapped, not with anger but resentment. "Who did you think I was?

"I decided to trim my hair. It was getting in my lovely eyes," he chuckled with sincerity. "So I got a haircut. What's the big deal? I'm me, Ken Patera, the strongest man alive. But I tell you, that wasn't uh, what's his name, Mil Mascaras," Patera said, chuckling again, but this time a little more wickedly.

"I think that was just some prelim wrestler who stole one of Mil's masks. He didn't wrestle like Mascaras."

Now let's just stop this right here. Mascaras contends that Patera wasn't Patera. Patera claims that Mascaras wasn't Mascaras.

"I am Mil Mascaras," the masked man said stoutly.

"I'm Ken Patera," the dark-haired man contended.

If we can penetrate this troubled situation, the crucial reason for this doubt revolves around Patera's changed style. He didn't try to maim Mascaras.

(Continued on page 62)

Flair and his friend Greg Valentine in a tag team match (left). Just how long can they trust each other now?

THE SPLIT BEGAN with a seemingly innocent television interview: Blackjack Mulligan was speaking to one of the local announcers. With an inhuman snarl, Ric Flair charged forward, grabbed Mulligan's beloved cowboy hat, and tore it into little, pathetic pieces.

Mulligan and the entire crowd, were stunned. Here was a friend of his, allegedly. A friend who would destroy Mulligan's most prized possession. A friend? No, a friend does not do that.

Shortly afterwards, Mulligan converted to the ways of the scientific community. His conversion was met with disparaging grunts from Flair.

"That ugly pansy just couldn't take it," Flair snorted. "Glad I don't have to bother with him."

Flair, for all his contempt of Mulligan's sudden shifting of allegiances, still remembered the intensity of their friendship. For years, whenever Flair would wrestle someone, he would go back and tell Mulligan all about that

THE TREACHERY THAT HA
RIC FLAIR A

Ric Flair has trusted only two men during his wrestling career—Greg Valentine and Blackjack Mulligan. Now that Mulligan has turned on him, Flair trusts no one. This has made Ric the most ruthlessly dangerous grappler alive!

opponent. And Mulligan would accord him the same courtesy. It was inconceivable that Mulligan would ever turn on Flair despite the fact that Flair held the United States heavyweight title, a belt Mulligan unabashedly coveted.

"I want that title," Mulligan said. "Yeah, I know who has it. I still want it."

Of all the hundreds of wrestlers who could pose a challenge to his crown, Blackjack Mulligan was not considered among this group. Or so Flair thought. Until . . .

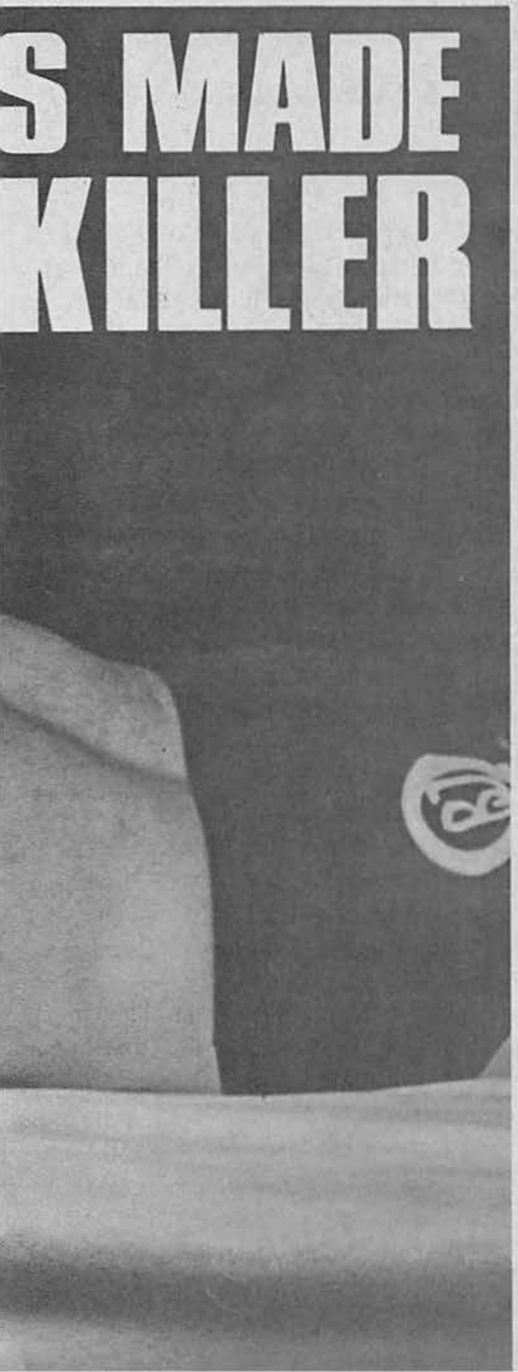
"I want Ric Flair. I want to smash that cowardly animal's face. I want his belt," Mulligan issued his challenge.

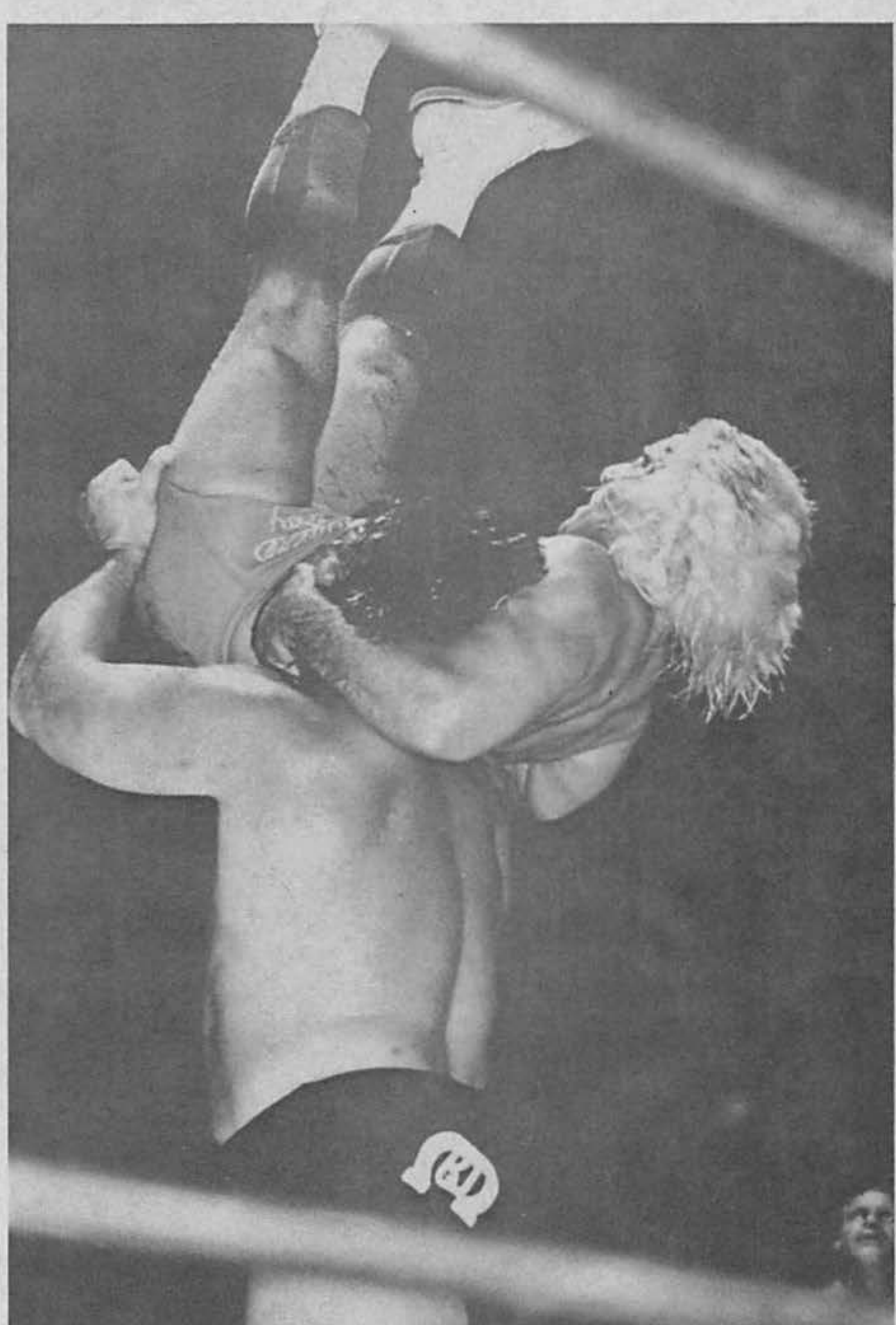
Flair blanched when he heard the news. He couldn't believe that Mulligan would say that to him. He was a friend. Maybe not a friend like he once was, but all those years of friendship had to mean something.

"I couldn't believe it when I heard that treacherous oaf challenge me, call me out," Flair said. "Sure I tore up his hat, but that was in a fit of rage over something else. It wasn't personal, understand?

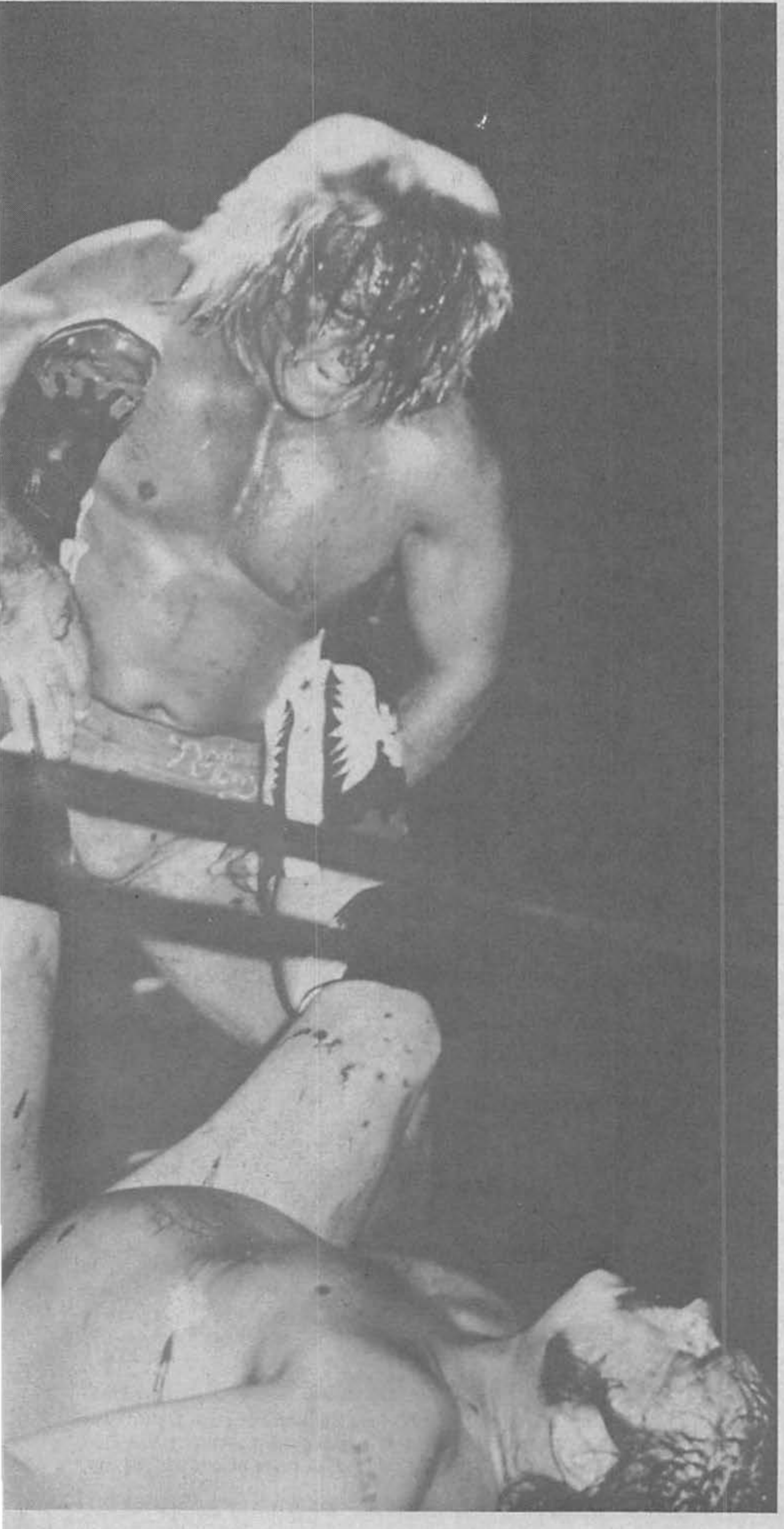
"I tell you, if that oversized clod wants a fight, he's got one. Brother, he's getting himself into a rumble, a real fine rumble."

Rumble is an understatement for what transpired the night of the championship match. It was a grisly, dreadful match. Blood soaked everything, Flair,





During the days when they were friends, Flair helped Mulligan many times. Ric passes Blackjack a foreign object to use on an opponent several months ago (left). Now Flair and Mulligan are no longer friends as is evident (above) as the bloody war goes on.



Flair entered the ring looking snazzy (above), but was rendered a bloody mess (left).

Mulligan, the canvas, dripped onto the referee, slid over onto the ringside tables.

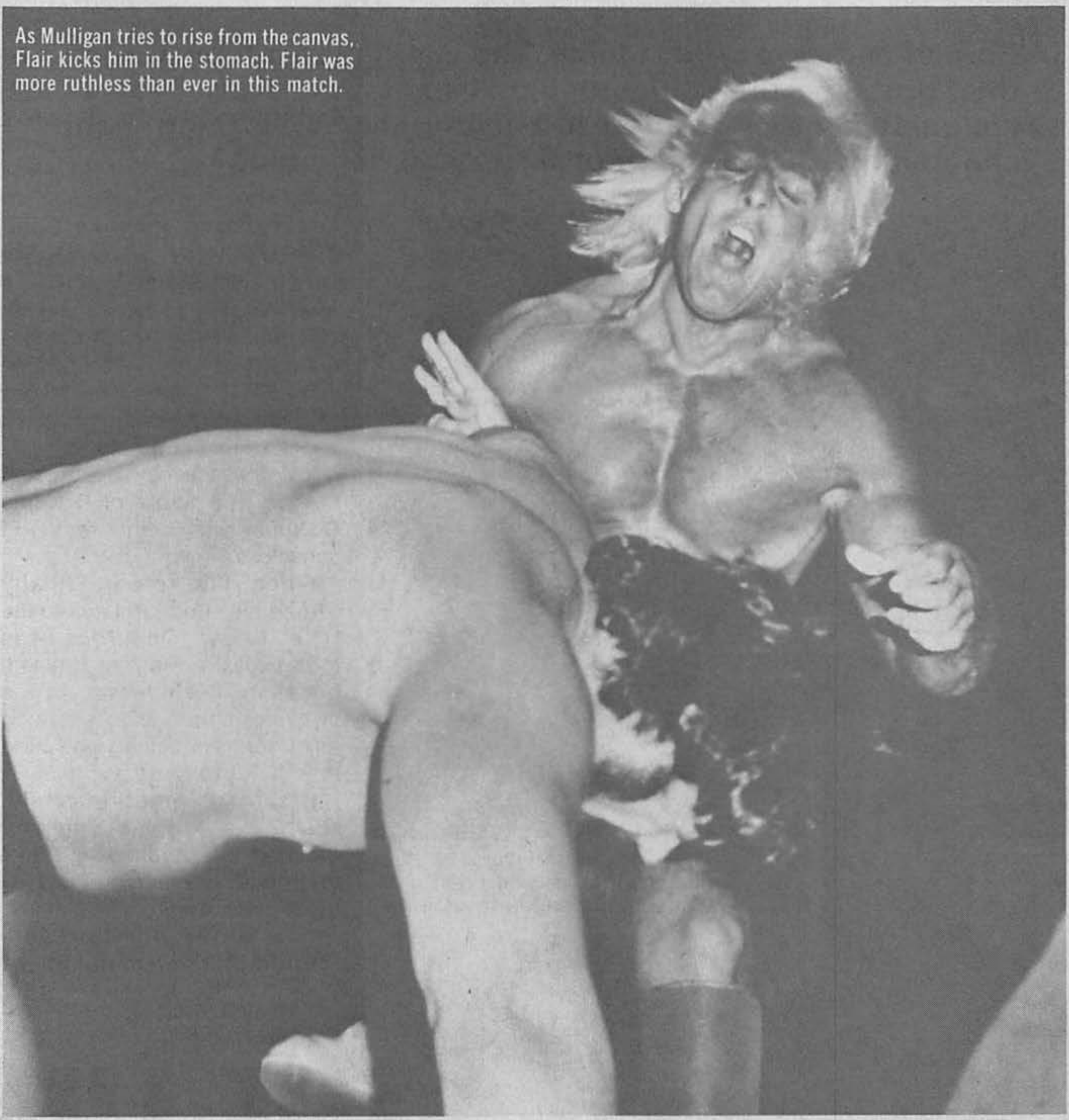
Blood, blood, blood. Blood of treachery and reprisals. Blood of a friendship destroyed. Permanently. Blood which has left an indelible, malignant scar on Ric Flair's soul. Blood which has transformed Ric Flair into an encrazed killer, like a wounded killer, throbbing with the hurt of treason.

"After this match," Flair winced as some salve was applied to one of his many cuts. "I know I can't trust anyone anymore. No one is above suspicion. I have to think anyone will stab me in the back if they get the chance. Mulligan did it, anyone can."

Stabbing was one of the few things not done that night. They tore at each other with chilling ferocity, utterly oblivious to the consequences, to themselves, surely to each other.

"Yeah I wanted him. That guy called me a traitor? Well, he isn't fit to live, hear that?" Mulligan stormed.

"I wanted the title and I should have gotten it. I could have gone on. That's a lousy excuse, stopping a match because there was too much blood."



As Mulligan tries to rise from the canvas, Flair kicks him in the stomach. Flair was more ruthless than ever in this match.

It was obvious that Flair and Mulligan would have fought this one down to the proverbial death. Since there are laws against murder, it was mercifully stopped, with Flair retaining the belt. And the scars.

"You know what it's like not to be able to trust anyone?" Flair said in a high, punctured voice. "I can't trust anyone.

"Mulligan and I were like brothers, closer, even, 'cause with brothers you're born together, but with a friend you come together on your own.

"But after the way he stabbed me in the back, I have to mistrust anyone who comes close to me. I see how everyone in the wrestling world is after me. Now what do I do?

"Do I wait for them, stupidly keep walking into ambushes so they can bludgeon me like Mulligan tried to do?

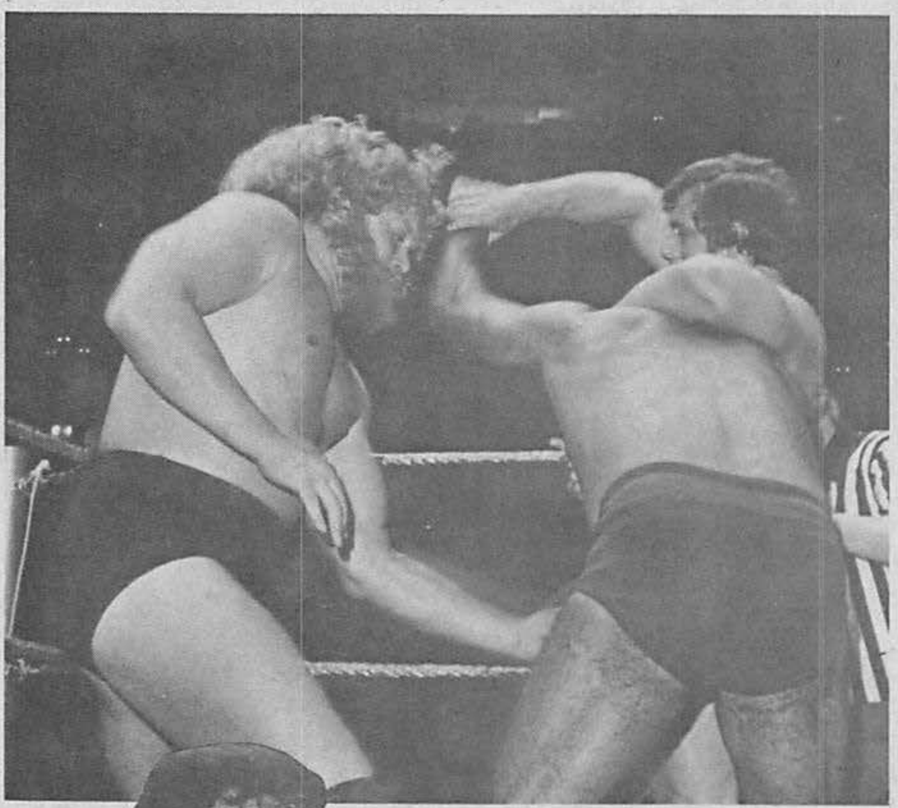
"Or do I start attacking everyone, on the idea that everyone is after me, that everyone wants my hide, that I better get them before they get me?

"Hah, you know what choice I have. The decision has been made for me. I have to go on the warpath, a real killing warpath with only mutilated bodies behind me. This really woke me up, damnit and I'm not taking anymore chances.

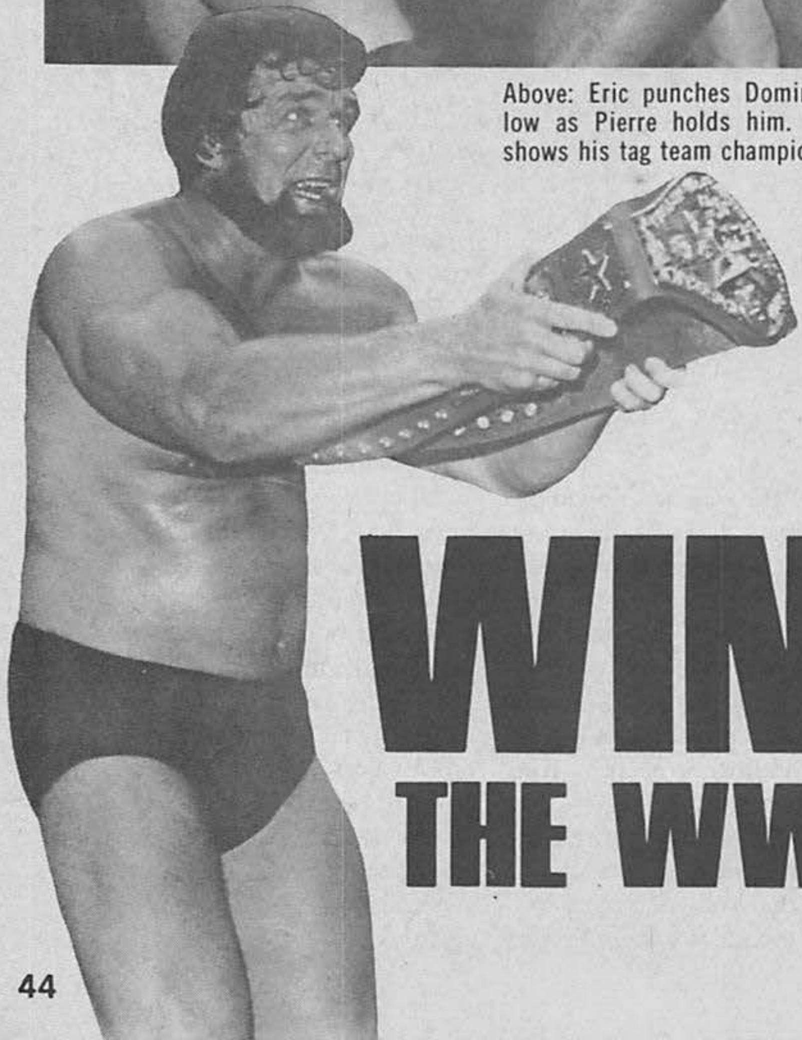
"I won't confide in people. No more. You have to really prove yourself before I'll trust you again. As far as I'm concerned, everyone is an enemy.

"And you know what I do to enemies." □

Born of bad times and trouble, The Lumberjacks have forged their brutal partnership with blood and sweat. Now, they've conquered the opposition to become the WWWF tag team champions. Is their reign of terror just beginning?



Above: Eric punches Dominic DeNucci low as Pierre holds him. Left: Pierre shows his tag team championship belt.



HIS PARTNER WAS pummeled to the canvas. Seeing this, Dino Bravo leaped into the ring to save Dominic DeNucci from this double-teamed battering. The referee saw Bravo enter the fracas illegally and chased him back out of the squared circle.

But while the referee was doing his job, the figure of Dominic DeNucci was being rendered senseless.

When the referee finally turned his attention back to the title bout, DeNucci was motionless, a lump of bruised, purplish flesh obscuring a swelling chest and lacerated arms, lungs expelling wheezing breaths of tortured air.

Bravo screamed insanely, again ran into the ring and grasped the crushed figure of his friend, cradling the beaten head in his arms.

The other portrait surrounding this moment of

THE LUM
WIN—AND
THE WWWF TAG TEA

ruptured despair were the joyously gyrating figures of The Lumberjacks, Eric and Pierre, who had just won the WWWF tag team title.

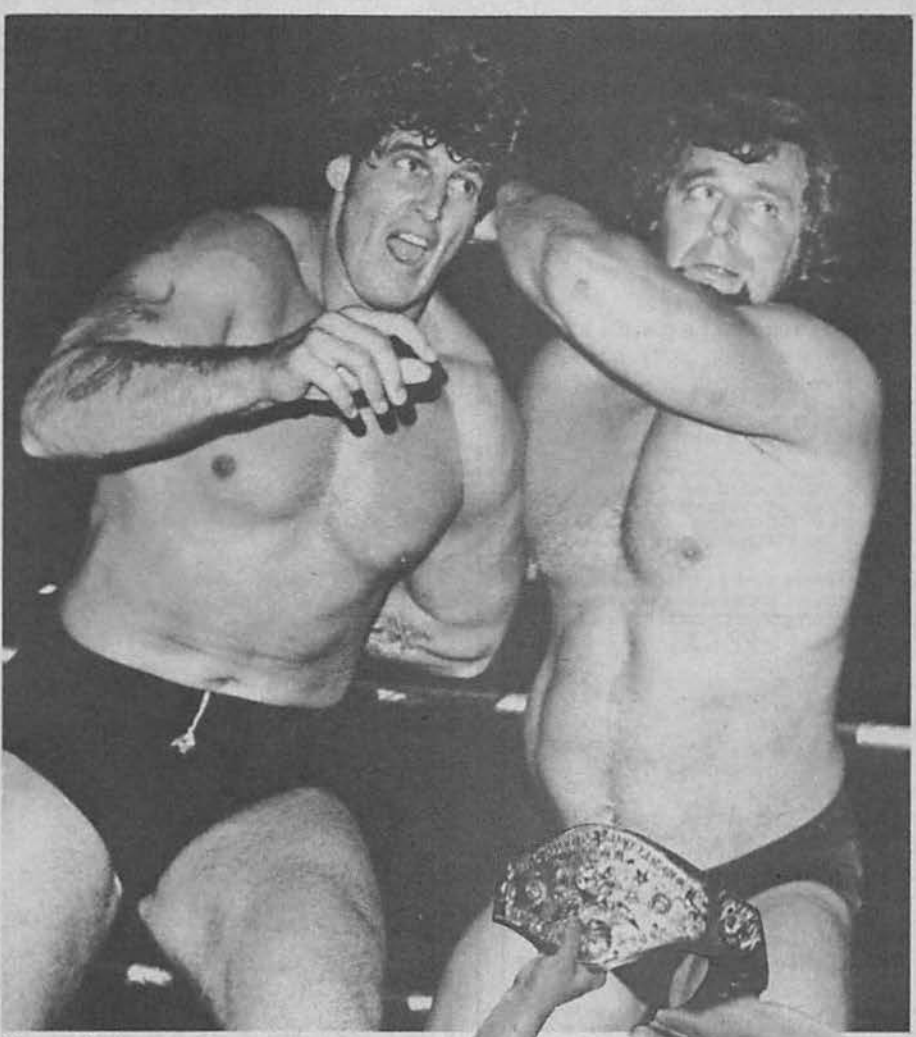
As essential as this match obviously was, dwelling on only this bout would somehow detract from the instantaneous alarm the new champions have created in the WWWF area. With thundering arrogance, they have accepted challenges from all manner of tag teams.

"We've been waiting a long time for this and we ain't about to shy away from anyone," Eric said warningly. "I don't care what type of people want to wrestle us. Me and Pierre are ready for them. Just bring 'em on. We'll wrestle anyone. We're the champs, right?"

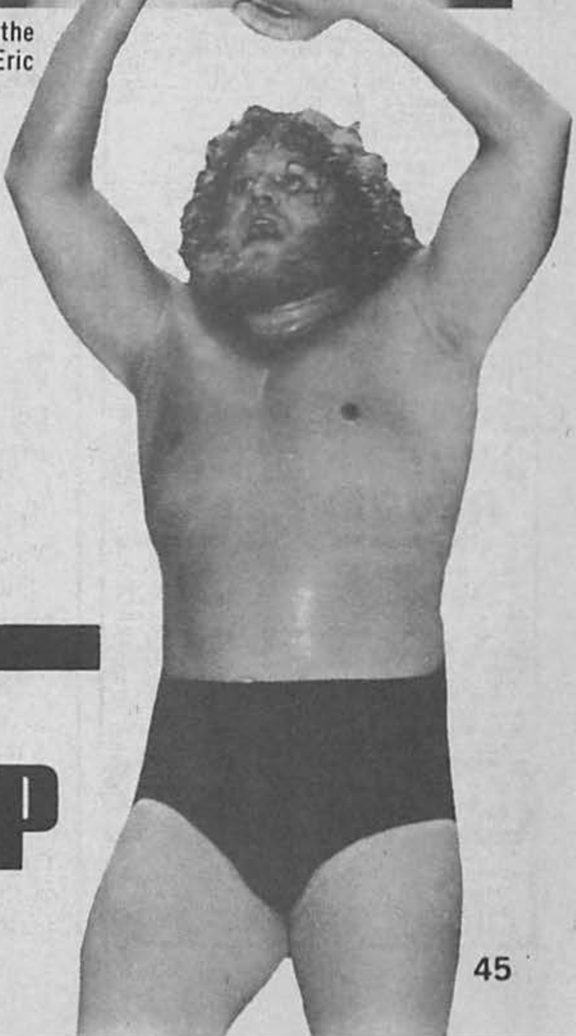
Numbered among the Lumberjacks' most recent victims is the team of Larry Zbyszko and Haystacks Calhoun.

"They're mean dudes," Calhoun shook his head wonderingly. "They're just real bad. There ain't nothin' they won't do to win a match. Champions? Ah, they're not champions. Just thugs. But you

(Continued on page 64)



Above: Pierre runs Tony Garea across the ring to a waiting turnbuckle. Right: Eric displays his championship title belt.



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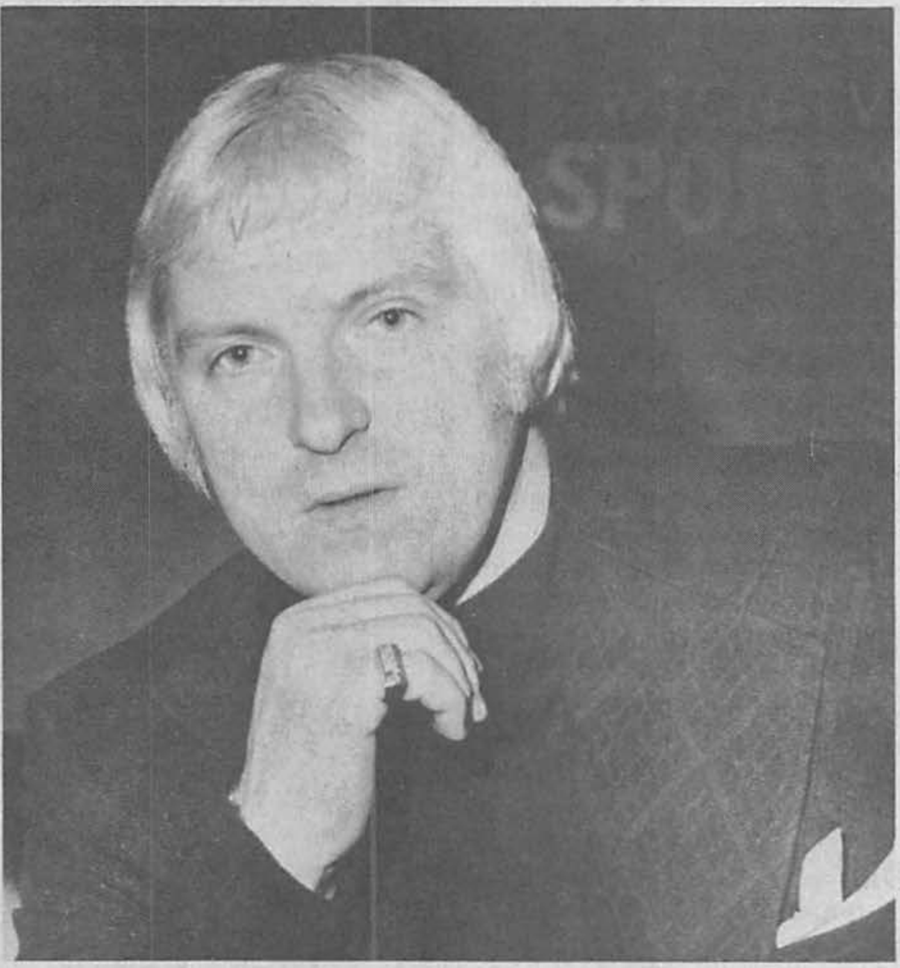
WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from Page 10)



Bobby Heenan (above) who is the manager of AWA champion Nick Bockwinkle, has finally found a way to keep Nick from defending his title in non-AWA governed areas. Heenan's method could force Nick to overwrestle and thus cause him to lose the title.

Lumberjacks!" exclaims Albano . . . John Valiant, known to his friends as "Luscious" John, is wrestling in Florida minus brother Jim . . . Ox Baker says he is disgusted with wrestling in the U.S.A. and may go abroad for awhile. "I have beaten everyone in America!" exclaims the big Ox. "They had better import some new talent for me to wrestle or I'll go after it myself."

Greg Valentine has admitted in an exclusive interview with THE WRESTLER that he does not want to team with brother Dale Valentine. Greg's reason: "I have much more experience than Dale. He would be a handicap as a tag team partner with an experienced wrestler like me. When I tag team you can bet I only choose the most experienced pros." Greg currently holds the NWA tag team title along with veteran battler Baron Von Raschke.

Mil Mascaras and brother Dos Caras are the exact opposite of Greg and Dale. Even though Dos Caras has less mat hours going for him, Mil never hesitates to team with him. As a matter of fact the two are on a tour of the Orient grappling the finest teams offered.

Together with Larry Lane, Dory Funk Jr. has formed a duo to become the Western States tag team champions . . . Jay Youngblood on the warpath with Ric Flair his main object of hatred

. . . Alberto Madril's fans shocked to see him using questionable tactics in the ring . . . Gino Hernandez is another fan favorite steering toward the rulebreaker direction . . . Dick Slater has incorporated the headbutt into his already extensive wrestling repertoire . . . Killer Brooks and Leroy Brown hoping to regain the Texas tag team title.

For the time being, Bobby Heenan, manager of AWA champion Nick Bockwinkle, has stopped Nick from defending the title in NWA territory (Nick has been defending in the NWA when he's not contracted to wrestle in the AWA. Heenan has always disapproved of Nick doing this). "I have booked Nick so solidly in the AWA he won't have a chance to breathe," Heenan said. Many AWA promoters feel Nick has been overbooked in the AWA and it could lead to his eventual downfall.

Super Destroyer II keeping his identity a secret in the AWA while Super Destroyer I is doing the same in Japan . . . Blackjack Mulligan denies rumors that he has signed to wrestle former tag team partner Blackjack Lanza . . . Steve Keirn has been promised a match against NWA champion Harley Race . . . Fans are upset with Tully Blanchard since he embarked on a feud against "Soul Man" Rocky Johnson.

Bruiser says that "Missouri Champion Dick Murdoch is one of the most aggressive men I have ever wrestled. He's a real hell-raiser and I have to use everything in and out of the rulebook against him . . ." Jerry Brisco's face must be aching by now. He was subjected to two of the best clawholds in the sport one night after the other when he wrestled Spoiler on a Friday night in Florida and Blackjack Lanza on Saturday night in St. Louis! How did Jerry feel on Sunday?

"Like I just spent 48 hours with my face under the tire of a Mack truck!"

And that's what's happening! □

DR. A. S. MAKES HIS PATIENTS
SEVERAL INCHES TALLER

By the use of traction the doctor claims to INCREASE THE HEIGHT of his patients by SEVERAL INCHES (From reports in recent national newspapers.)

Dr. R.L. reports contributing to the INCREASE IN HEIGHT of his patients between the age of 18 to 25 by as much as 3½" (From the annales of Physical Medicine)

"MAN GROWS to 40 and sometimes 50" according to late Curator of Physical Anthropology of the Smithsonian Institute. Some facts recently confirmed by Washington Doctor

"The Influence of Exercise on Growth" revealed by U.S. Surgeon (From the Journal of Experimental Medicine) A controlled group experiment

"GAINS IN HEIGHT and weight as a result of experiments on boys from 12 to 17" Studies in Physical Development and Posture (From U.S. Public Health Bulletin)

Mr. C.A. claims and testifies to HEIGHT INCREASE of 1½" at age of 54

Mr. A.S. writes to leading newspaper how father INCREASED HEIGHT by 1½"

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from Page 18)

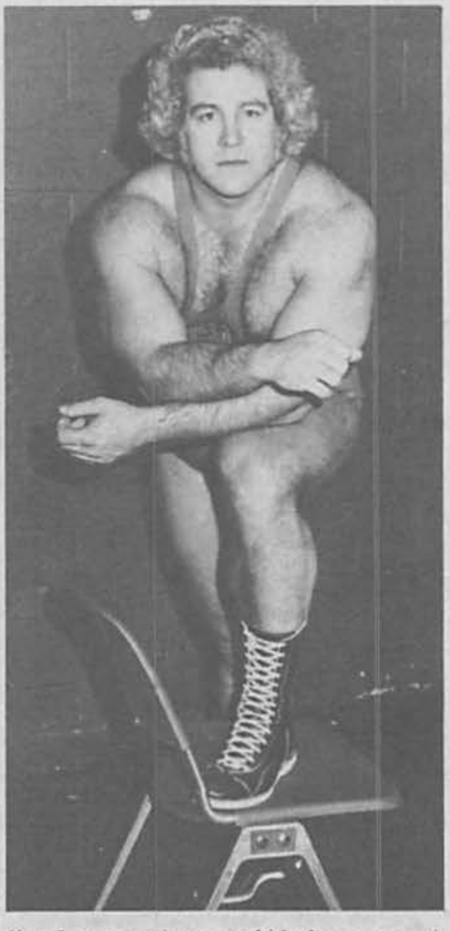
WHO'S THE BIG MOUTH, BRUCIE?

This idiot Bruce Wilhelm who had the nerve to write that disgusting letter (October 1978) seems to be nothing but a bragging idiot. I wouldn't believe a word he said about Ken Patera and he seems to think that because he won the World's Strongest Man competition, that entitles him to down-grade a great person like Patera.

Isn't it obvious that if Ken hadn't injured his back Wilhelm would be back in North Carolina munching on some old cow hair?

I think your magazine should look into the truth of these letters instead of allowing defamation to occur.

MAXWELL PERKINS
New York, N.Y.



Ken Patera and many of his fans are mad because the winner of "The World's Strongest Man" competition attacked Ken verbally.

I'M IRATE!

Who the hell is this Bruce Wilhelm creep? I've never heard of him. What does he do for a living, pump gas? Can he carry Ken Patera's wallet or boots? No. Yet he makes such outlandish statements like he did in that dreadful letter (October 1978).

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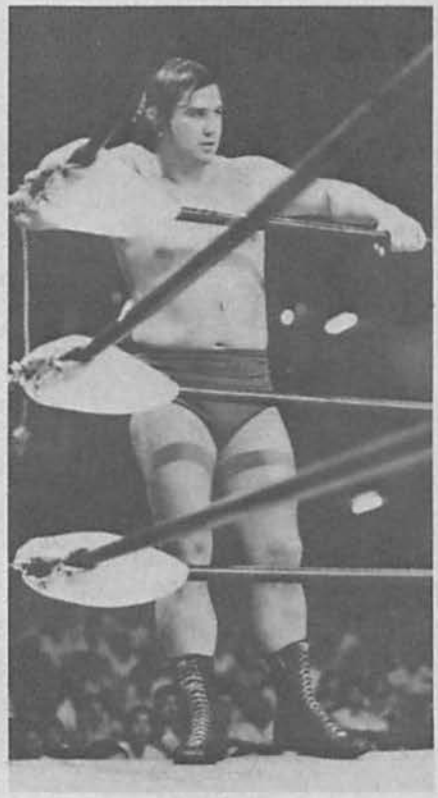

Jerry Brisco waits outside the ring during a tag team match. Jerry is crusading to make Dick Slater change his ways during his matches in Florida.

I saw the competition and I know that Patera was hurt, as everyone did. And Ken was never a failure at the 1972 Olympics. Is this letter the beginning of another smear campaign against Patera, aided by your lousy magazine?

DANNY PEARL
Talahassee, Fla.

A LOT OF NERVE

Guys like Jerry Brisco make me barf up my dinner. "The Man Who Wants To Beat Some Sense Into Dick Slater" (October 1978) was just another example of these arrogant scientific wrestlers thinking they have the only way to success and prosperity in wrestling.

If Dick Slater is happy the way he is, who the hell does Jerry Brisco think he is to say that Dick is wrong. I've seen Slater and I've seen Brisco, and Jerry is a pile of old bomber shoes compared to Dick.

ERIC FROEHM
Athens, Ga. ☐

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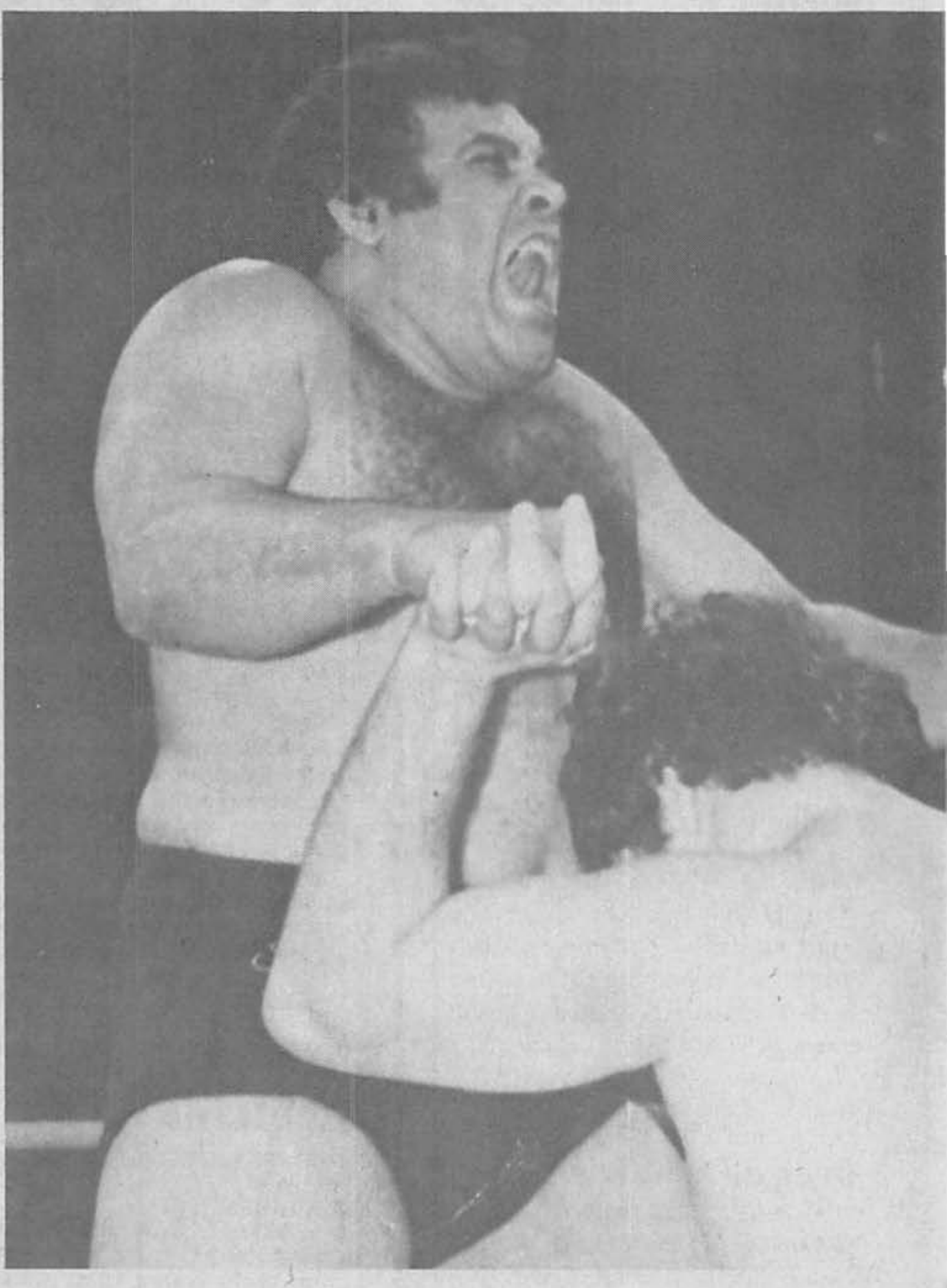
VERNE GAGNE

(Continued from Page 21)



Mosca brings Robinson down to his knees during a battle of fingerlocks. Gagne learned a lot from refereeing this match.

stand in the middle of the ring to scout someone. I could do a better job at ringside, because there I can concentrate fully. As referee I have to watch the action."

"Verne wasn't spying, though I wouldn't put it past him," Robinson said in explanation. "I won the match. I deserved the decision. Verne couldn't have learned much. Not when he's refereeing. Too much for him to do."

Mosca remained unconvinced, heatedly so, claiming that Gagne was partial to Robinson and used the position in the ring for his own selfish pursuits.

"Gagne is partial to Robinson because Billy's a good guy,"

Mosca's voice was slimy with sarcasm. "And I'm the baddie, so he gave it to Robinson. A real ref wouldn't have done that.

"But I saw Verne making notes after the match. He had them all in his head and was just waiting for it to end so he could write them down. You could see how annoyed he was that it went to the limit. He was afraid he'd forget them."

Notes?

"What notes?" Verne asked expressionlessly. □

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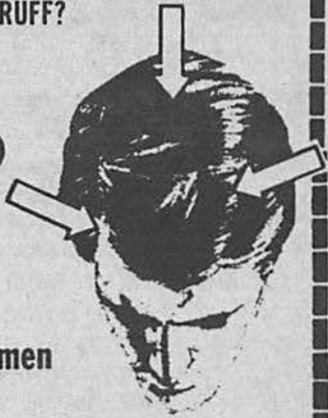

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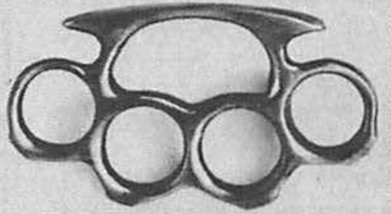

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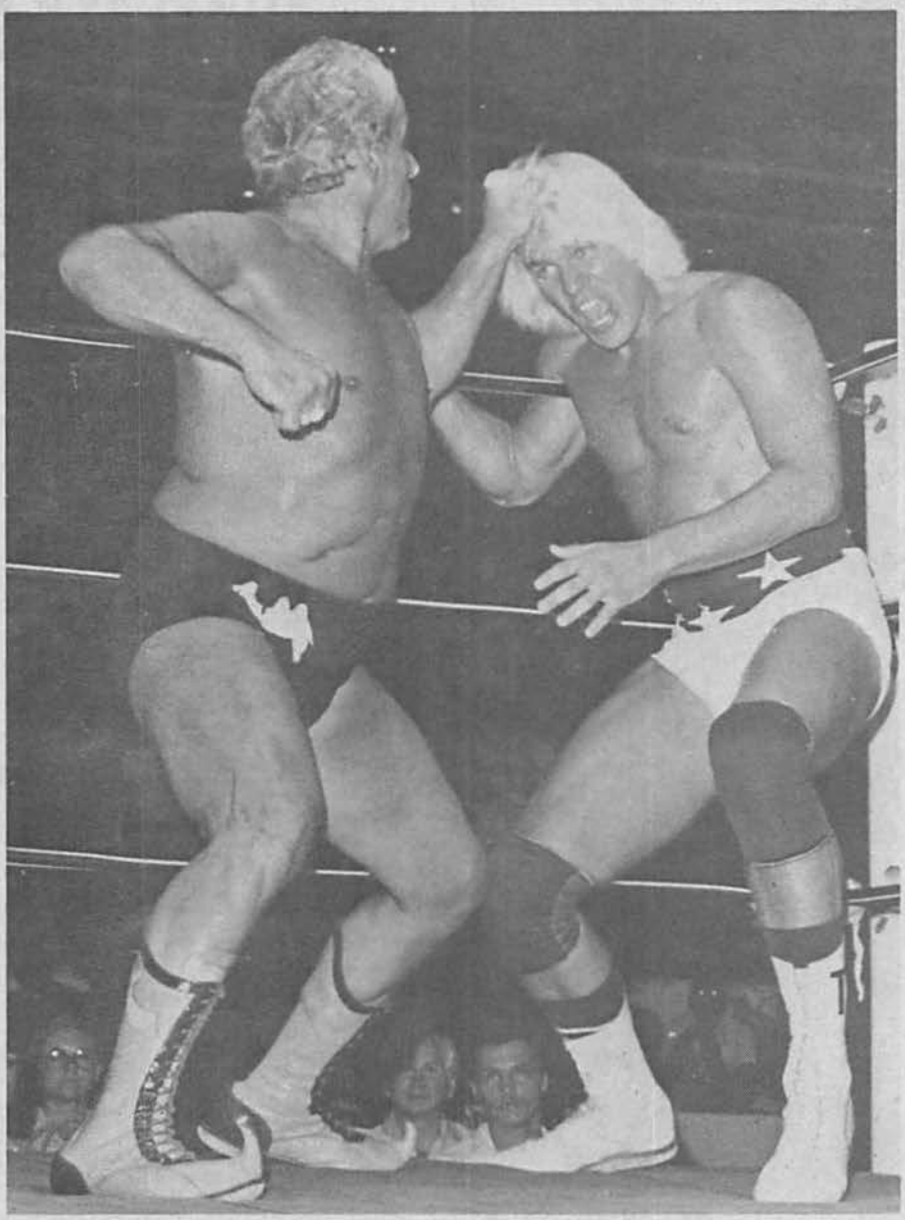
TOMMY RICH

(Continued from Page 25)



Sheik traps Rich in a corner and begins to punch away at the horrified rookie star. Sheik is a man who shows no mercy, as Tommy found out. No man who ever faces Sheik can afford to be off guard for a moment.

than fall still. Another drum roll, and then she would be shoved within the fiery hulk, her tormented wails silenced by the bubbling lava which charred her beautiful body.

Now that civilization has tamed Earth's baser instincts, we no longer hold sacrifices—supposedly. Yet what happened to Tommy Rich in Georgia *was* a sacrifice. Without question. He was offered up by the veteran scientific wrestlers as a sacrificial opponent for the deranged beast of blood and smoke that is known by the human name, The Sheik.

Fortunately, unlike the vestal virgins of centuries past, Rich survived. But barely. He left the ring a crimsoned mass of battered flesh, his innocence conclusively shattered, the experience a permanent reminder of what a

rookie must do, must face, before he can take the next tentative step up the title mountain.

"We all had to do it when we were young," said one wrestler who requested anonymity. "Rich is a kid and he had to get his feet wet. So we didn't want to or have to wrestle Sheik. He did. Now, if he doesn't want to, he doesn't have to

Tommy poses for our photographer just moments before the match. "I hear this Sheik is a real animal," Tommy said.

wrestle that lunatic again."

But he had to the first time. And the compelling question is whether it was worth it, whether Rich learned anything more than bitterness and the name of an effective physician.

"Wow, what a match," Tommy said, his bruised body sprawled atop the locker room table. "That Sheik is just not a human being. I don't know what he is, but he's not human."

The Sheik unveiled every conceivable sinister move. He bit and kicked and punched and used a foreign object and tried to eat Tommy's left ear and tear his chest hair off and pull off his fingernails.

(Continued on page 54)

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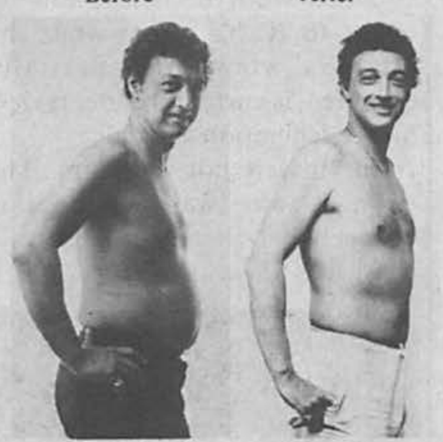

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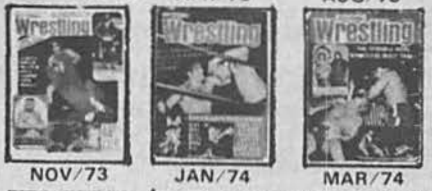

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TOMMY RICH

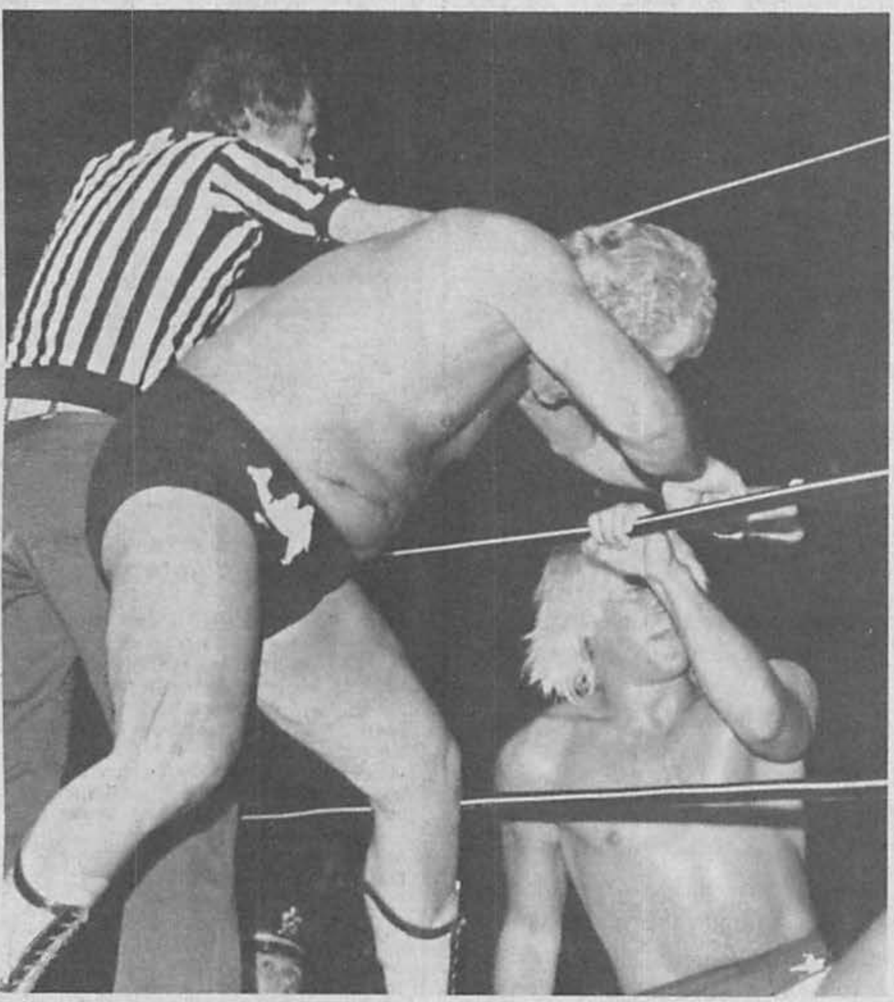
(Continued from Page 53)

Everything. Even now, the decision which gave Sheik the victory, obtained when he held a foreign object to Rich's throat while the referee's view was partially obscured, is currently under review by the federation officials.

But that is not the point. The point is why was a promising rookie like Rich matched against a beast like Sheik?

"I was told that it was up to me, as the new kid, to wrestle that, that . . ." Rich's voice faded, replaced by a disconcerted gaze of his eyes. "Whatever he is. At first, I thought it would be the typical good guy versus bad guy match. Then when I entered the ring and started wrestling him, well, I actually got angry!

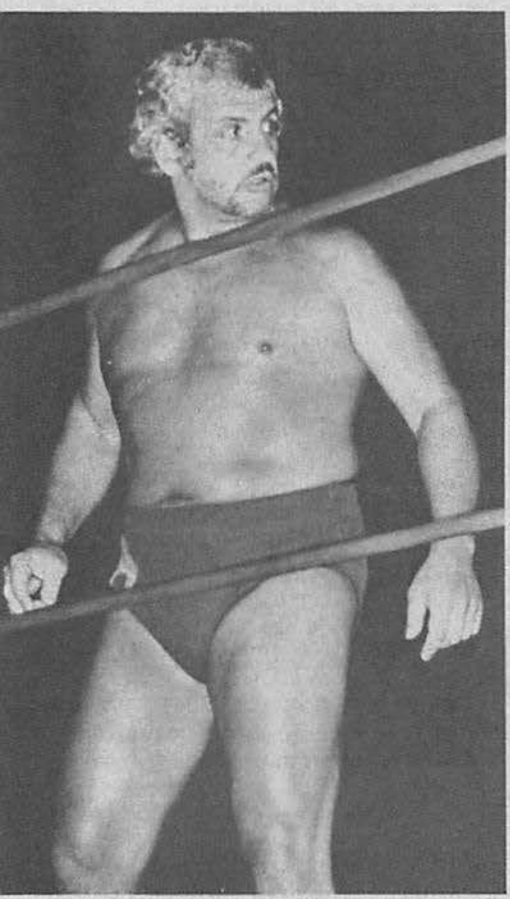
"Not so much at The Sheik, because to give him anything beyond hatred is to give him an intelligence he doesn't have. I was mad at my so-called friends in the scientific wrestling community who suggested I wrestle him as an 'experience'." Rich said with anger.



Rich is thrown from the ring and Sheik begins to bash away at the blond wrestler's head.

"Sure, I knew I have to get experience and I knew sooner or later I'd have to face someone like Sheik. But for my friends to suggest I wrestle him because I needed experience and for me to realize that they wanted me to wrestle him just because they were afraid to. Well, that doesn't hold with me."

Obviously, the experience was not a positive one. It left behind the



After the match, Sheik is about to leave the ring and head back to the dressing room before leaving the arena.

resin of distaste in Tommy Rich, a nagging sense of mistrust for those whom he should be able to depend on.

"Now I have to think twice when someone suggests I wrestle a rulebreaker to get the needed learning experience. Now I find I can't fully trust people. That's a lousy feeling to have," Tommy said.

Yet several disclaimers were voiced by wounded good guys who insist that Rich didn't understand, who denied any fear about wrestling Sheik, who were convinced that Rich did learn something, a lesson that will greatly enrich his career.

"We all wrestled men like Sheik. And we will wrestle people like him again," said one wrestler. "But if Rich ever hopes to become champ, he has to know what it's like to face people like that. Now he doesn't understand, but someday he will." □

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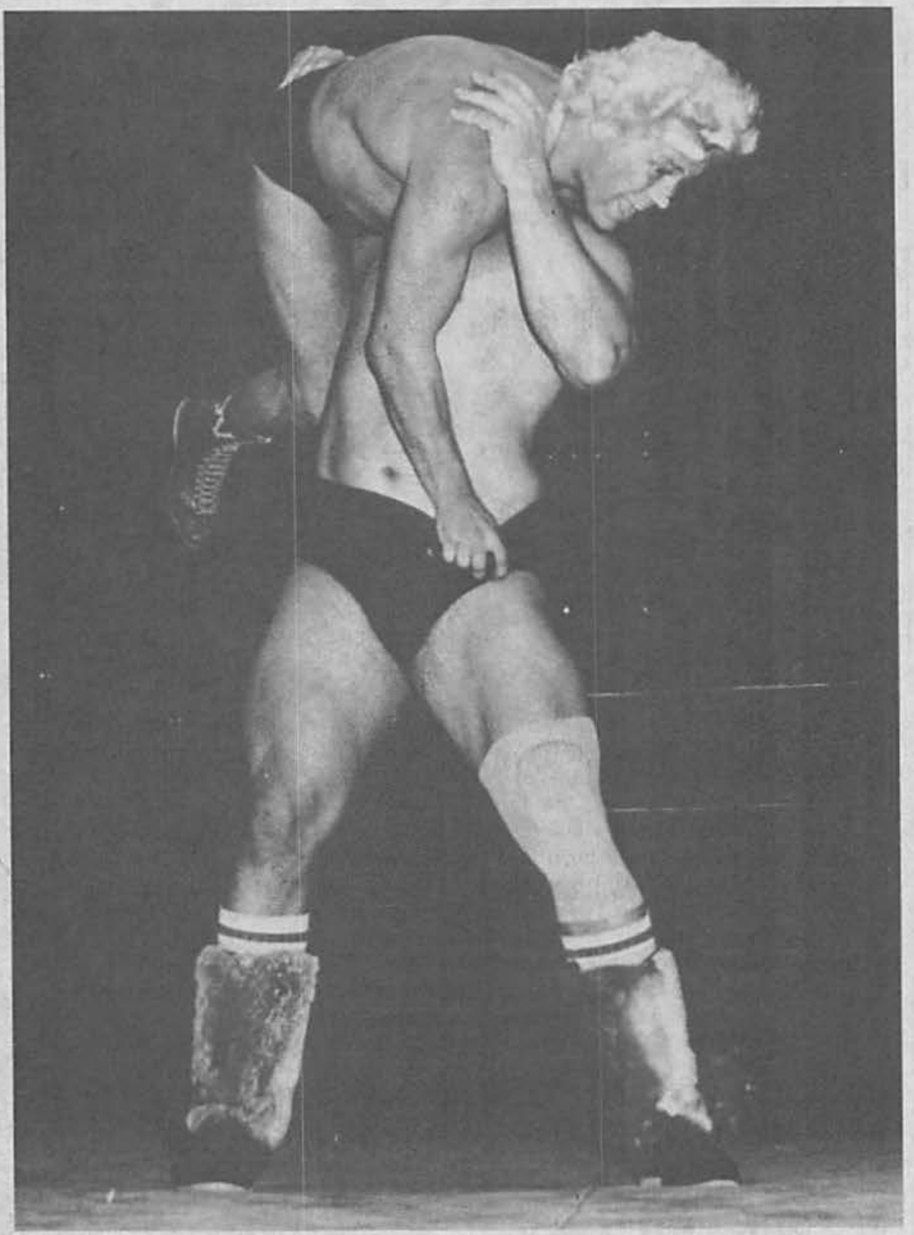
DALE VALENTINE

(Continued from Page 31)



Brodie's savage strength played a large part in the match as he picks up Dale Valentine and prepares to toss him halfway across the ring. Dale was astonished at Brodie's brute strength.

Things get bad for Brodie so he resorts to extreme violence, tossing Valentine out of the ring and smashing him with a chair.

about my youth.

"I don't think he's gotten his ego bruised. I think he sees how young and virile I am and he sees what an old fool he's become," Dale shrugged. "I haven't anything against the guy personally, only what he did to Johnny.

"But you mess with one Valentine, you end up messing with all of us," the smile disappeared, replaced by a furrowed frown. "He'll learn."

The traditional roles of veteran rulebreaker teaching young scientific wrestler some of the nastier moves were reversed in this match. It was not the case of Brodie showing Dale anything he didn't already know. It was the case of Valentine demonstrating that he was no raw rookie but a battle-honed soldier capable of wiping that smug expression off Brodie's face.

"You think Brodie'll think twice about wanting to call me a kid?" Valentine chuckled. "I think I showed him who's good and who isn't.

"Lot of these guys come in to wrestle me thinking one of two things. Either they think that I'm just a boy and don't know anything.

"Or else they want to wreak vengeance on me for something one of my brothers did. I think I knocked those two things out real well tonight.

"I showed that just because I'm young doesn't mean I don't know anything. I've got a good head on my shoulders and the best manager in the world, Johnny. And I also showed that a Valentine is willing and able to knock anyone on their behind if they get wise. We don't look for trouble, but we'll finish them off if we have to."

For Brodie's reaction, one had to press beneath the angry eyes and pursed lips.

"He still ain't got nothing," Brodie said lowly. "He'll never be the man Johnny was. And you know what I thought of Johnny Valentine." □

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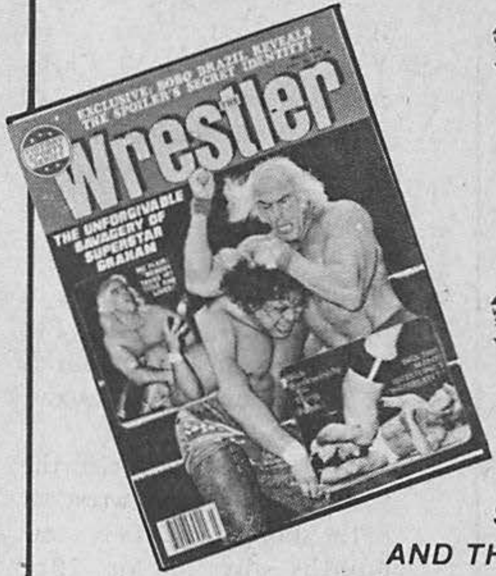

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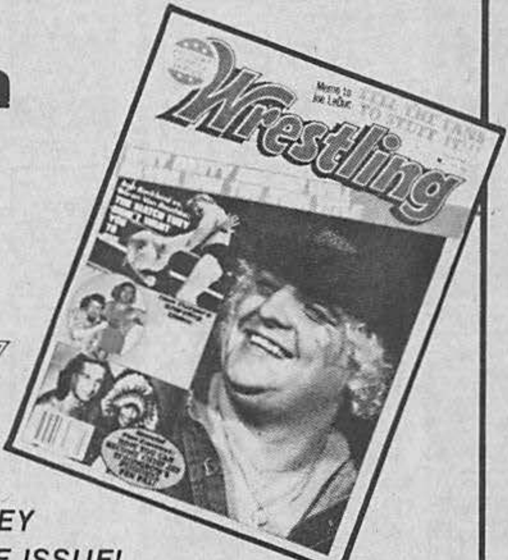

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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from Page 8)

Q: My friend told me that Mil Mascaras and the Golden Terror are the same person. Is this true?—Carla Snoop, Billings, Mont.

A: Your friend is wrong, Carla. As a matter of fact, Mil recently unmasked the Golden Terror, ending his reign of cruelty forever.

***

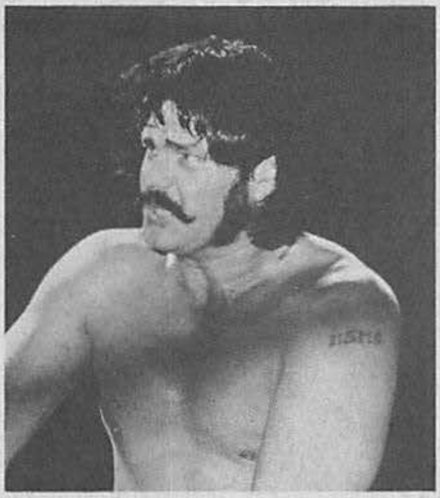
Q: Tommy Rich looks like one of the youngest wrestlers I've ever seen. Just how old is he?—Helene Valentinuzzi, Jacksonville Beach, Fla.

A: Tommy is indeed one of the youngest main event wrestlers in the sport today. He is a few months shy of his 20th birthday.

***

Q: Will Blackjack Mulligan ever get Ric Flair in a cage match for the U.S. title?—Barney Hubbard, Shelby, N.C.

A: "I would love to get that little pansy creep between steel," Mulligan told us. "But I think that yellow-haired SOB is also yellow-hearted. He runs away every time he hears I'm within one hundred miles of his worthless hide."



Blackjack Mulligan admits that he would love to cripple Ric Flair in a cage match, but says Flair is too chicken to do so!

***

Q: Is it true that Harley Race would rather give up the NWA belt voluntarily than have to wrestle Dusty Rhodes again?—Spanky Wheat, Columbus, Ohio

A: "What kind of fools ask you people those questions?" Harley asked us when we asked him. "Why should I be afraid of the 'Obese Dream?' Every time we've wrestled, I've beat him in less than three minutes. But what kind of question can you expect from a bimbo named Spanky?"

***

Q: Is Chris Taylor still wrestling? Egbert Salve, Amherst, Ohio

A: Chris is still wrestling, though on a greatly-reduced schedule. He expects to return to a full schedule early next year.

***

Q: What is Andre the Giant's wrestling record?—Robie Davis, Troy, N.Y.

A: As we go to press, Andre's ring record stands at 1,043 wins and no defeats, a record for most victories in a row.

***

Q: I read in the sports pages of my local paper that Bruno Sammartino and Dusty Rhodes were once AWA tag team champions. Is this true?—Jean and Natalie Concord, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

A: Sorry, girls, but there is no truth to that report. In fact, Bruno and Dusty have never teamed up anywhere, although both men have the highest respect for one another.

***

Q: What part of Russia does Ivan Koloff come from?—Nikki Gorki, Seattle, Wash.

A: Koloff was born in Leningrad, but moved as a young child to Moscow. He now has a villa in the Ural Mountains.

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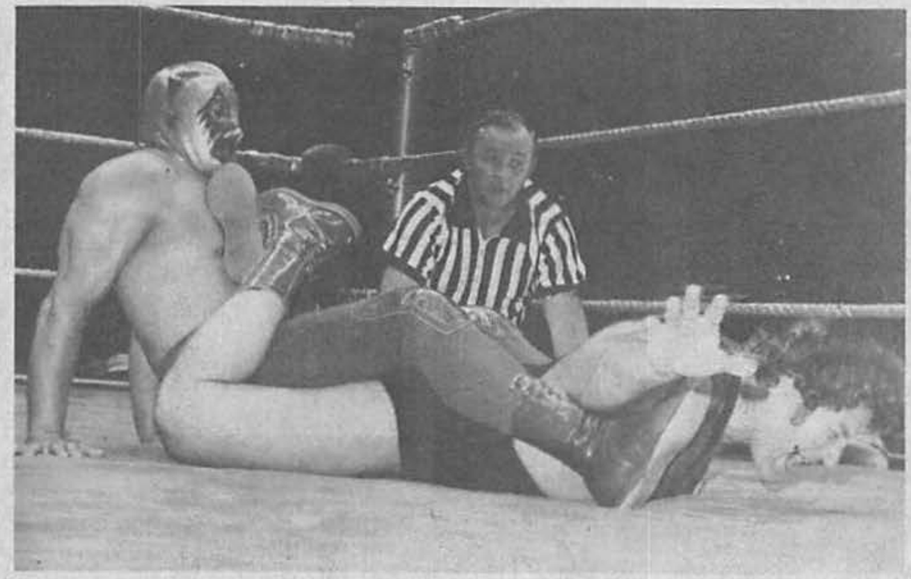
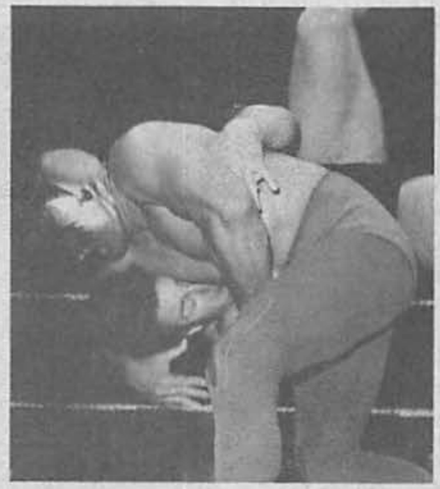
MASCARAS VS. PATERA

(Continued from Page 39)



This hold is a typical Mascaras invention, the master of improvisational holds. Patera is screaming in pain (above). A headlock has Patera in trouble (below left). Mil's hiplock (below right) takes his opponent down to the canvas.



He didn't try to bring a chair into the ring or stoop to any of the really cruel rulebreaker tricks which have characterized his career.

"I wanted to try something different," Patera explained. "I wanted to try something different, show whoever that man was that I can wrestle scientifically, that I don't have to use rulebreaker tactics.

"You know, people, those morons who are uninformed, just don't understand how difficult it is to be both a rulebreaker and still a fine scientific wrestler. Every once and a while I like to shock the fools and show them it can be done.

"So that's why I did this, though I really wanted to wrestle Mascaras, not that bum they threw in."

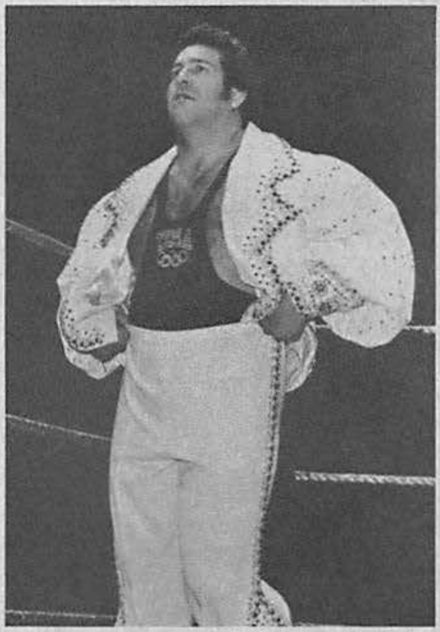
Wait, just wait a minute, Ken, before we are trapped under a wave of utter confusion. You insist you're Patera. We accept your explanation. It sounds like of character, but we'll accept it. But that *was* Mil Mascaras. Wasn't it?

"The Ken Patera that the world has known and disliked was always a despicable man, though he did have some talent," Mascaras said behind

his multi-colored mask. "This man tried to stay within the rules, and it was an interesting match. Too bad it did not go to a resolution."

The match was halted by the 11 p.m. curfew effective in New York, disappointing the frenetic Madison Square Garden crowd which had wanted to see this magnificient bout carried to a conclusive end.

But the fact that the bout was halted by the curfew bell is not what is important. What is important is whether this



The "new" Ken Patera enters the ring to do battle with Mil. Few people in the arena recognized the strongman.

change by Patera points to a permanent return to the scientific school of wrestling.

"No, why should it? You think I want to be labeled and boxed in like those other creeps, boring fools who can only wrestle one way, whether good or bad guys? I want some variety in my life and I don't want to be neatly packaged for the rest of my career by any dumb-ass fans or promoters and then, you guys, you stupid creep wrestling writers printing a pack of lies in your stupid, lo[illegible] . . ."

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BATTLING GIRLS

WINTER 1975

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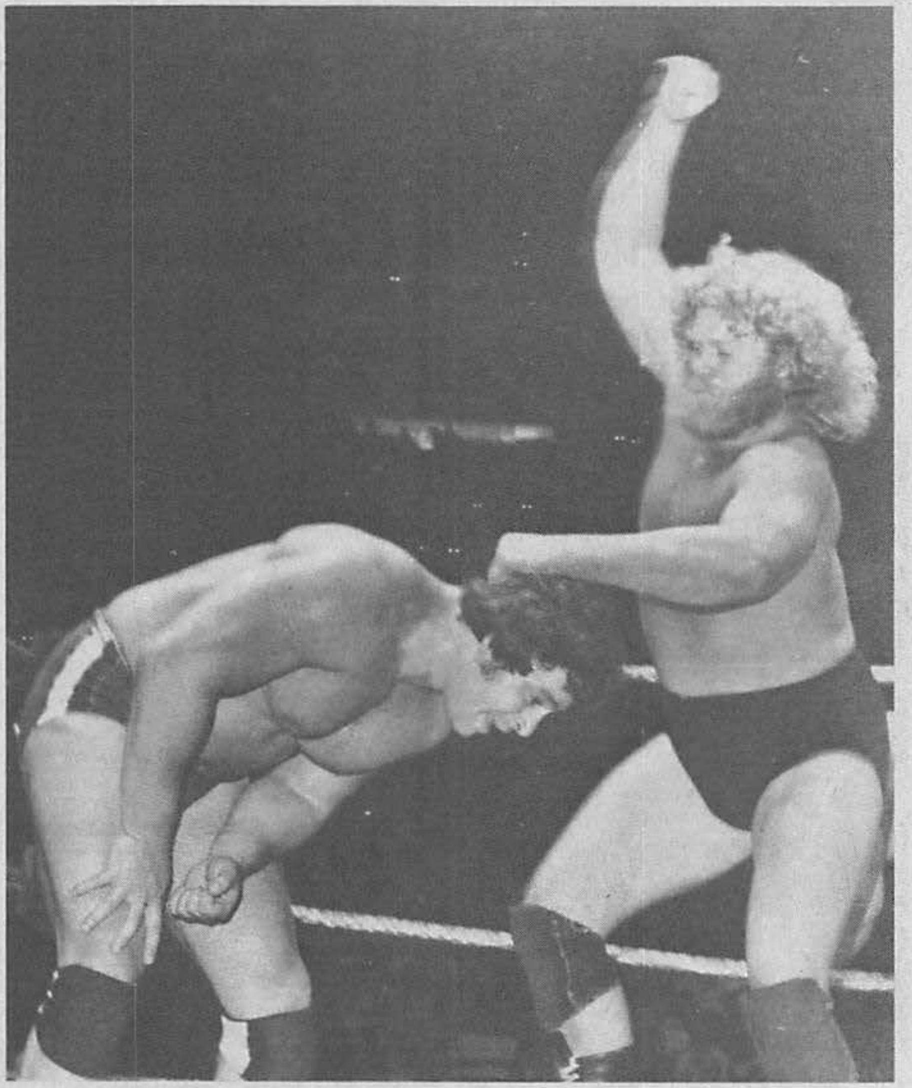
THE LUMBERJACKS

(Continued from Page 45)



Eric is about to smash Dino Bravo during the match that saw The Lumberjacks win the WWWF tag team title. They are two of the most aggressive wrestlers ever seen in the WWWF area.

gotta wrestle them because they've got the belt for now."

Eric and Pierre do employ a rather murderous repertoire of crunching rulebreaker holds and mutant scientific moves, all of them deadly.

"I don't like them," said Zbyszko, "because I just don't care for rulebreakers as champions. When I think of champions I think of Bruno [Sammartino] and Verne Gagne. People like Race or Bockwinkle or these horrid things don't come across as champions.

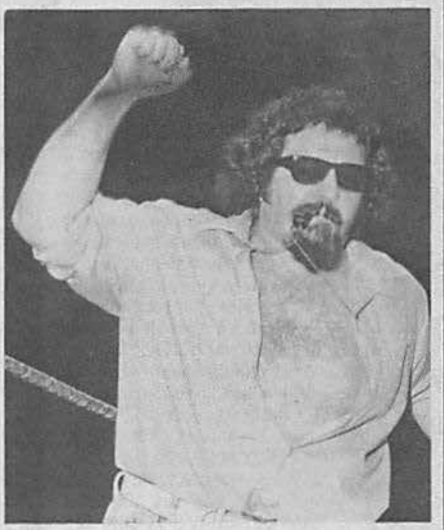
"But they're not that good. They'll be stopped soon."

It may be wishful thinking to believe that Eric and Pierre will succumb shortly. They have demonstrated a punishing ruthlessness unseen in wrestling circles for a good many years. They traveled long and hard to get the belts and, off their subsequent defenses, they are not about to relinquish it without a brutal war.

"We are definitely the best wrestlers around," Pierre said, his words threatening. "When we look around the WWWF, we

don't see anyone worth taking our belts.

"Bravo and DeNucci, greaseballs, we eat them up and spit their type out. Calhoun? That fat farmer is too busy chewing on cow dung to ever beat us. Zbyszko? Hah, that's a laugh. He's been riding the coattails of other men for a long time now. He ain't got anything on his own.



The man who led The Lumberjacks to the title—Captain Lou Albano. "They are my greatest champions!" Lou gloated.

"So who can stop us? Nobody, baby. And they all know that. They all know that sooner or later we'll have whooped them all and battered their noses into ice cream and their legs will have been ripped off and their tongues chewed off at the roots. They're all afraid of us!

"But know what else we got? We got a lot of really fine fans behind us, the intelligent ones, the ones who can read and write, unlike most fans. They recognize our genius and support us 200 percent. With that and our own greatness, we can take anyone, any night, anywhere."

Sturdy words. Unfortunately supported by formidable deeds. The Lumberjacks. WWWF champions. God save the Federation. □

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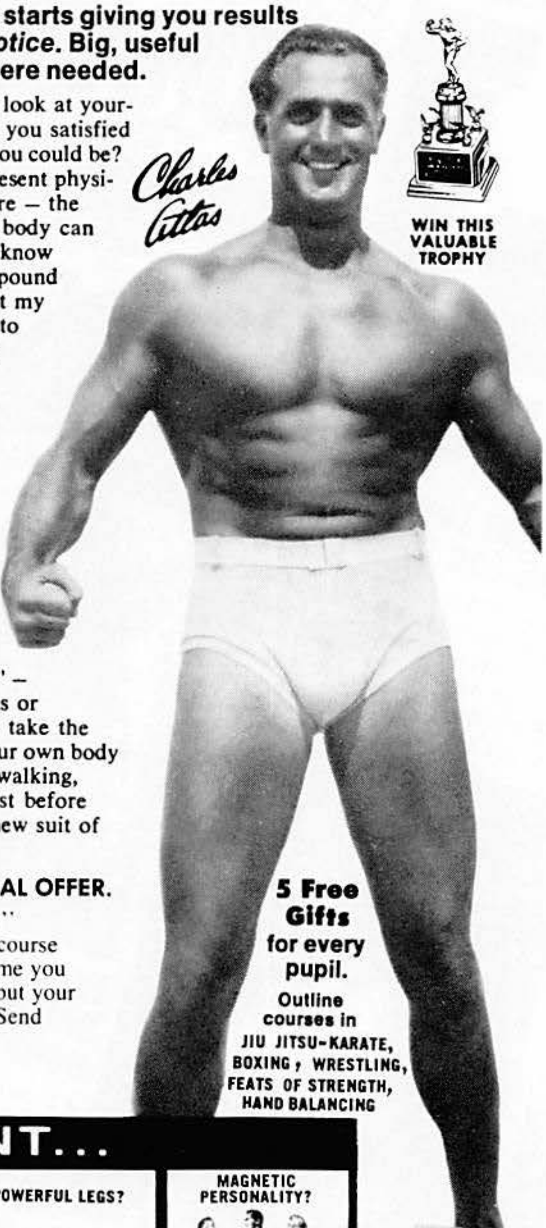

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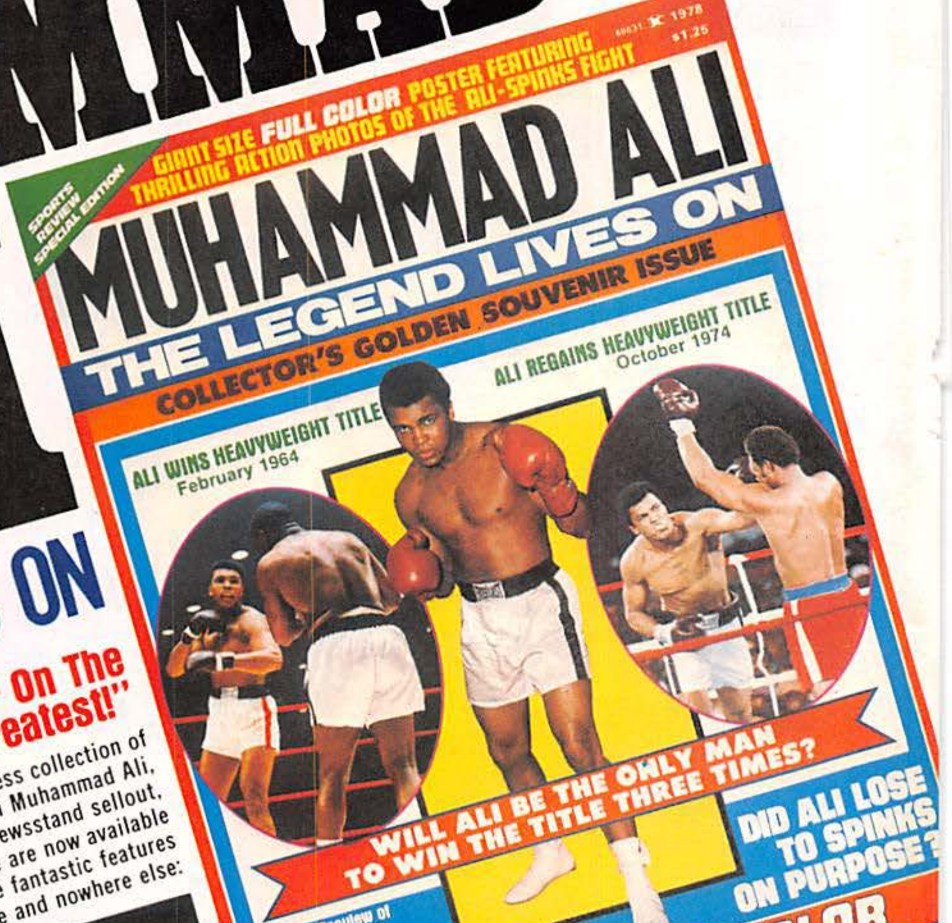

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